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[For myths relating to spirits and gods see category 116, pp. 95-106.]

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which he places all the victims, human or piscine, he may succeed in capturing[1]." 775

Mr Portman correctly translates the word *Ĵuruwin* as meaning "the spirits of the sea" using the plural and not the singular[2].

Further references to the Andamanese beliefs about the spirits will be found later in the chapter. It is necessary at this point to consider an entirely different class of beings.

The Andaman Islanders personify the phenomena of nature with which they are acquainted, such as the sun and the moon. Before relating in detail what could be learnt about their beliefs on these matters, it is necessary to call attention to one feature of these beliefs. Different statements, not only of different informants, but even of the same informant, are often quite contradictory. For example, it is sometimes said that lightning is a person, and at other times it is said that lightning is a fire-brand thrown across the sky by a mythical being named *Bilĭku*. These two statements, which to all logical thinking are incompatible, are both given, and apparently both equally believed, by the same person. Many examples of such contradictions will be found in what follows, and it is important to point out their existence beforehand. 776 821

About the sun and moon, the most usual statement in all the tribes is that the sun is the wife of the moon and the stars are their children. In the North Andaman the moon is *Maia Dula* (*Aka-Čari*) or *Maia Čirikli* (*Aka-Ĵeru*), the sun is *Mimi Diu* and their children the stars are *Čatlo*, the larger ones, and *Katań* the smaller. *Čatlo* is the name of a species of finely marked beetle, and *katań* is the name of the common fire-fly. Individual stars or constellations are not recognized.

Another version from the same tribes is that the moon (*Dula*) is female, and has a husband named *Maia Tok*, while the sun (*Diu* or *Tọrodiu*) is male.

In the *Aka-Ĵeru* tribe there is a belief that the moon (*Maia Čirikli*) can, when he wishes, turn himself into a pig, and come down to earth and feed on the things that the pigs eat. There

[1] Man, *op. cit.* pp. 158, 159.

[2] Portman, *Notes on the Languages*, etc. p. 183.

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is a legend that on one occasion the moon thus turned himself into a pig and came down to earth to eat the *čuei* fruit. A man named *Maia Čoinyop* met the moon (in the form of a pig) in the forest, and shot him with an arrow. *Čirikli* (the moon) took out his knife and killed the unfortunate *Čoinyop*, cutting off his head, which he left behind, and taking the body up to the sky where he ate it.

In the *A-Pučikwar* tribe the most common statement is that the moon (*Puki*) is male and that the sun (*Puto*) is his wife. A different statement from the same tribe is that the moon is female and is the wife of a being named *Tomo*. *Tomo* seems to be to some extent identified with the sun. Thus one informant said that it is *Tomo* who sends the fine weather, and that it is he who sends the daylight every day. Where *Tomo* lives, in the sky, it is always day and is always fine. When the natives die their spirits go up to the sky and live with *Tomo*. We shall see in the next chapter that, according to some of the legends, *Tomo* is the first ancestor of the Andamanese.

Yet another version is that the moon was made by *Tomo* out of opalescent stone, and it is *Tomo* who, in some way, regulates its passage across the sky.

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A belief about the moon which is found in all the tribes, both of the North and the South, is that he will be very angry if there is any fire, or any bright light, visible when he rises in the evening shortly after sundown. At such times the natives are careful to cover up their fires so that they only smoulder without flame. Mr Man refers to this custom. "From fear of displeasing *Maia Ogar* (Mr Moon), during the first few evenings of the third quarter, when he rises after sundown, they preserve silence, cease from any work on which they may be engaged—even halting should they be travelling—and almost extinguishing any light or fire that may be burning. This is owing to the belief that he is jealous of attention being distracted to other objects than himself at such a time, or of any other light being employed than that which he had been graciously pleased to afford so abundantly. By the time the moon has ascended a few degrees, however, they restore their fires and resume their former occupations, as they consider that they have sufficiently

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complied with *Maia Ogar's* wishes and requirements. The glowing aspect of the full moon on its first appearance above the horizon is supposed to indicate that *Maia Ogar* is enraged at finding some persons neglecting to observe these conciliatory measures; there is also an idea that, if he be greatly annoyed, he will punish them by withdrawing or diminishing the light of his countenance[1]."

As regards the waxing and waning of the moon, Mr Man says that these are explained by the *Aka-Bea* "by saying that they are occasioned by 'his' applying a coating of cloud to his person by degrees, after the manner of their own use of *ko̤iob* (red paint) and *tala-o̤g* (white clay) and then gradually wiping it off[2]." In the *Aka-Kede* tribe the natives say that as *Maia Čirike* (Sir Mo̤on) goes across the sky, his tongue hangs out of his mouth, sometimes more, sometimes less, and that it is the tongue that is visible, that gives the light. I did not hear any explanation of the waxing and waning of the moon in the tribes of the North Andaman. In these tribes the new moon is called *Dula e-tire*, i.e. the "baby moon," the word *e-tire* denoting the young offspring of an animal or a human being.

With regard to a lunar eclipse Mr Man writes that "in case *Maia Ogar* should be so ill-advised as permanently to withhold his light or render himself in other ways still more disagreeable, whenever the moon is eclipsed some persons at once seize their bows and twang them as rapidly as possible, thereby producing a rattling sound as if discharging a large number of arrows, while others commence at once sharpening their *rata* (arrows). Of course this hostile demonstration is never lost upon the moon, who does not venture to hurt those who show themselves ready to give him so uncomfortable a reception. Their immunity from harm on these occasions has given rise to some joking at the expense of the luminary in question, for, during the continuance of the eclipse, they shout in inviting tones to the hidden orb as follows:—*Ogar, laden balak ban lebe y'idoati! dcati! doati!* (O Moon, I will give you the seed of the *balak!* show yourself! appear! appear!) This is said derisively, for, although these

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 152. [2] *Ibid.* p. 160.

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seeds are largely consumed by the pigs, the aborigines do not consider them fit for food[1]."

It may be noted that the invitation to the moon to eat *balak* seeds is not perhaps derisive, but may be connected with the belief that the moon can turn himself into a pig in order to feed on the things that pigs eat.

There was no eclipse of the moon during my stay in the islands. The natives of the North Andaman told me that on such an occasion they frighten the moon into showing himself again by lighting the end of a bamboo arrow-shaft, and shooting it from a bow in the direction of the moon. Another custom of which they told me is to take plumes of shredded *Tetranthera* wood (*čelmo* or *uǰ*) and blow on them towards the moon.

Mr Man states that "a solar eclipse alarms them too much to allow of their indulging in jests or threats, &c.: during the time it lasts they all remain silent and motionless, as if in momentary expectation of some calamity[2]."

There are several different accounts in the North Andaman of the phenomena of day and night. The night is often personified and is called *Mimi Bat* (Lady Night). One version is that it is she who makes the night while *Maia Ṭorodiụ* makes the day. *Diu* is the name of the sun, and *ṭoro-diu* really means "the full sun" and refers to the middle part of the day when the sun is well up in the sky.

Another Northern version is that the daylight is made by a being named *Tautọbitatmo* who lives in the sky. He shuts up the day under a stone every evening and lets it out every morning. Of *Tautọbitatmọ* I was told that he is sometimes to be seen in the evening sky, but I was not able to discover to what natural phenomenon reference was made. I was also unable to discover the meaning of the name, which is a compound, *tau* being the sky.

Still another version from the same tribes is that it is a being named *Maia Čara* who makes the daylight. *Čara* seems to be the equivalent of the *Tomo* of the *A-Pučikwar* and other Southern tribes. He is sometimes said to have been the first ancestor, and sometimes the creator, of the Andamanese. He lives in the sky.

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 160. [2] *Ibid.* p. 161.

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Another belief about the night connects it with the spirits. The *Lau* (spirits) in the sky, wrap up the night in a cloth or mat. When they unroll the cloth it becomes dark. The natives of the North Andaman formerly called cloth *lau-ot-julu*, from a stem *-julu* meaning "cold." They were only acquainted with cloth through seeing it used by the aliens who visited their shores, and whom they called spirits (*Lau*).

In the North Andaman thunder and lightning are commonly personified. The lightning is *Ele* or *Ali*, and the thunder is *Korude* or *Korule*. Some of the natives spoke of *Mimi Ele* (female) and others of *Maia Ele* (male). He lives in the sky, which is regarded as being made of stone (or rock) and is called *tau-meo* (the sky-stone). The lightning is due to his shaking his foot. One rather obscure statement was to the effect that *Ele* spends most of his time asleep or lying down and doing nothing. When the weather gets bad *Lato* (a being that I could not identify), comes and worries *Ele* and wakes him up. Then *Ele* gets angry and shakes his leg. This is the lightning.

Thunder (*Korude*) also lives in the sky. It is said that he makes the thunder by means of a large round stone. One account is that he rolls the stone about over the sky. Another is that he makes the stone hot, and this produces the thunder.

An entirely different explanation of thunder and lightning, which is found in all the tribes, is that they are made by two beings named *Tarai* and *Biliku*, to be described later on in this chapter.

I never heard the rain (*jiċer*) spoken of as a person in the same way as thunder and lightning. One explanation of rain is that the sky-stone (*tau-meo*) gets cold, and this turns the mist (*milite*) into rain. Another is that in the sky there is a large hollow or pool, which gets filled with water and then overflows. Still another version is that the rain is made by a being (or beings) named *Čaitoy*, who seems to be female and lives in the sky. I could not obtain any satisfactory information about her.

In all parts of the islands the rainbow is believed to have some connection with the spirits of the jungle or of the sea. One very common statement is that it is a bridge of cane that stretches between this world and the world of departed spirits.

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It is along the rainbow that the spirits travel when they visit the earth. It is necessary to correct a statement by Mr Portman on this matter. In connection with the *Aka-Bea* word for the rainbow, *pidga-l'ar-ɗauga*, he says "The root *pidga* (a rainbow) must not be confounded with the root *pidga* 'a cane' or 'rattan.' The Andamanese have certain legends regarding the uses of the rainbow, and these have been hitherto understood as referring to 'canes.' *Pidga-l'ar-ɗauga* means 'the rainbow (bridge) by which the spirits (cross)'[1]." Mr Portman is in error. The word *pidga* means "cane" and the whole word means "the cane of the spirits." It is the whole word that is the name of the rainbow, and not the word *pidga*. An exactly similar compound name for the rainbow exists in each of the languages of the Great Andaman. The name of the particular species of large cane varies, being *pidga* in *Aka-Bea*, *peta* in *A-Pučikwar*, *pir* in *Aka-Jeru*, and so on. Apart from the fact that the natives themselves say that the rainbow is a "cane," Mr Portman would have us believe that in each of the different languages there are two exactly similar words, different in the different languages, one of which means "cane" and the other "rainbow," while there is no connection between the words. Thus *Aka-Bea* would have *pidga* meaning "a kind of cane" and *pidga* meaning "a rainbow." *Aka-Jeru* would have *pir* meaning "cane" and *pir* meaning "rainbow."

The rainbow is generally regarded as an evil omen, being believed to be a precursor of sickness. One *Aka-Jeru* statement is that it is made by a being called *Tolitoŋ* and that when it appears somebody will be ill.

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The only explanation of the tides that I heard was to the effect that they are caused by a fish, a species of *Tetrodon*, called *čolmo* in *Aka-Jeru* and *pit* in *Aka-Kede*, which drinks up the water and then lets it out again.

The Andaman Islands are occasionally visited by earthquakes. An *Aka-Kede* account of how earthquakes are caused is that when a man dies he goes to the spirit world which is beneath the earth. The spirits hold a ceremony. My informant spoke of the ceremony as *Kimil*, which is the name of the

[1] Portman, *Notes on the Languages of the South Andaman*, p. 328.

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initiation ceremonies. At this ceremony they have a dance similar to the peace-making dance described in the last chapter, but instead of erecting a screen such as is used in that ceremony, they make use of the rainbow. As they shake the rainbow in dancing this causes earthquakes. The ceremony which newly-arrived spirits have to undergo in the world after death is a *pọrọto kimil*, i.e., the initiate eats *pọrọto* (*Caryota sobolifera*).

Among the most important of the Andamanese beliefs are those relating to the weather and the seasons. These are under the control of two beings named *Biliku*, *Bilik* or *Puluga*, and *Tarai*, *Teriya*, or *Daria*. There are a certain number of points in which the statements of one informant may differ from those of another in connection with these two mythical beings, but there are also a certain number of points on which there is absolute unanimity in all the tribes of the Great Andaman.

The first belief in which there is entire unanimity is that of the connection of *Biliku* and *Tarai* with the two chief winds that are known in the Andamans. *Biliku* lives in the north-east and is connected with the north-east monsoon. *Tarai* lives in the south-west and is connected with the south-west monsoon. The connection is shown in the names of these winds, which are as follows :—

Language	N. E. Wind	S. W. Wind
Aka-Cari, *Aka-Bo*, *Aka-Kora*, *Aka-Jeru*	*Biliku boto*	*Tarai boto*
Oko-Juwoi, *Aka-Kol* and *A-Pucikwar*	*Bilik to*	*Teriya*
Akar-Bale	*Puluga toa*	*Daria*
Aka-Bea	*Puluga ta*	*Deria*

In the Northern tribes the word *bọto* means "wind." *Biliku bọto* must be translated "the *Biliku* wind," and *Tarai bọto* is similarly "the *Tarai* wind." It would be incorrect to translate the name *Biliku bọto* as "the wind of *Biliku*," for this would be rendered in *Aka-Jeru* by *Biliku ičo bọto*. In *A-Pučikwar* the south-west wind is called *Teriya* simply, the name of the mythical being connected with the wind being used as the name of the wind itself, just as is the case with the name *Ele* (lightning). On the other hand the north-east wind is called not *Bilik* but *Bilik tọ*. The same thing occurs also in the *Akar-Bale* and *Aka-Bea* languages.

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Mr Portman translates the *Aka-Bea* term *Puluga ta* as "God's wind," and he adds, in explanation, "*Puluga ta* means 'God's wind,' and the reason for the name is not known. Some vague ideas regarding the direction of God's dwelling in the sky are the probable origin of the term[1]." As regards the translation of the Andamanese name *Puluga* by the English "God" more will be said later. Leaving that aside, it is important to note that *Puluga ta* does not mean "*Puluga's* wind." The word for wind in *Aka-Bea* is given by Mr Portman himself as *wul-ŋa*, and the *Akar-Bale* and *A-Pučikwar* equivalents are *poat-ŋa* and *pọte*, being forms of the same stem as the Northern *bọto*. The translation of "*Puluga's* wind" in *A-Pučikwar* would be *Bilik l'iye pọte*, but this is not a phrase that the natives ever use. It is not possible to translate "*Puluga's* wind" accurately in *Akar-Bale*. *Puluga poat-ŋa* would mean "*Puluga* blowing" the *-ŋa* being a verbal ending. In any case *Bilik tọ*, and *Puluga toa* are not to be translated as meaning "*Puluga's* wind."

It may be observed, in reference to Mr Portman's statement, that the notions of the Andamanese as to the direction of the dwelling of *Puluga* in the sky are very far from vague. The natives all agree that *Puluga* or *Biliku* lives in the direction from which the north-east wind blows, really N.N.E. This is shown in geographical names. For example the side of Havelock Island that faces north-east is called *Puluga-l'ar-mugu*, meaning "the side that faces *Puluga*," from *ar-mugu* meaning "front" or "face."

There are two matters, then, on which there is absolute unanimity in all the tribes of the Great Andaman, one being the connection of *Biliku* (or *Puluga*) with the north-east and of *Tarai* (or *Deria*) with the south-west, and the other being the connection of these two beings with the winds that blow from these two opposite points of the compass.

The connection of these two beings with winds is shown in another way in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe, where the winds are divided into two divisions. One division contains only the south-west wind, which is of extreme regularity, and blows steadily for about five months in every year. This wind is

[1] Portman, *Notes on the Languages of the South Andaman*, p. 314.

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called *Teriya*. The other division contains all the other winds, and they are collectively denoted by the term *Bilik*. They are distinguished by names, as *Ĵila Bilik* (the east *Bilik*, from *ĵila*, east) *Ko̱ico Bilik* (the west *Bilik*), *Me̱tepur Bilik*, *Čo̱liatum Bilik*, *Rartear Bilik*, and *Ko̱ičor-to̱ŋ Bilik*. Here we find the name *Bilik* used not as the name of a single person, but as a common name for a class of beings who are the winds personified. The same use of the term is found also in the *Aka-Ko̱l* tribe.

Even in the *Akar-Bale* tribe something of the same kind is found. One *Akar-Bale* man said that *Puluga* has two brothers, *Ĵila Puluga* (East *Puluga*) and *Koaičo Puluga* (West *Puluga*); the one sends all the easterly winds and the other all the westerly ones.

In the Andamans the year is divided into two nearly equal portions. During the season of the south-west monsoon, which lasts from May to September, the wind blows steadily from the south-west. This is the rainy season. Violent storms never or only very rarely occur during the season of the south-west wind. From December to March the wind blows mostly from the N.N.E., occasionally changing to E.N.E. or N.E. In the periods at the change of the monsoon (from N.E. to S.W. in April and May, and from S.W. to N.E. in October and November) the wind is variable, and may blow at times from E.S.E. or W.N.W.

The south-west wind (properly speaking W.S.W.) is identified, as we have seen with *Tarai* (*Deria*). Although *Biliku* (*Puluga*) is specially connected with the north-east wind, yet all the winds other than the south-west are commonly supposed to be sent by *Biliku*. Thus we have seen that in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe the different winds are named, each of them (with the exception of the south-west) being a *Bilik*.

It comes about, in this way, that the year is divided into two portions, one of which is specially connected with *Biliku* (*Puluga*), while the other is specially connected with *Tarai* (*Deria*). These two seasons are not quite of equal length. The *Tarai* season lasts only while the south-west monsoon is blowing, which, in an average year, is between four and five months. The other seven months are connected with *Biliku* and are divided into three portions, (1) the stormy season of October

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and November, (2) the cold season of December to February, and (3) the hot season of March and April.

There are many points relating to *Biliku* and *Tarai* about which there is no general agreement amongst the tribes, or, in some cases, even within the same tribe. In the North Andaman *Biliku* is regarded as female, and is called *Mimi Biliku*, while *Tarai* is male and is called *Maia Tarai*. This is so in all the four tribes, *Aka-Čari*, *Aka-Bo*, *Aka-Kǫra* and *Aka-Jeru*. A statement that is frequently made by the natives of these tribes is that *Tarai* and *Biliku* are husband and wife. While this is the most common statement, there are, however, other versions of the matter. In order to show the lack of uniformity in statements about *Biliku* and *Tarai* in the Northern tribes I reproduce a few extracts from my note-books written down exactly as they were given to me.

(1) *Biliku* is the wife of *Tarai* and they have a child named *Perǰido*. (This statement was made to me a great many times in the North Andaman, and may be regarded as the most usual form of the belief.)

(2) *Biliku* is the wife of *Tarai*. Their children are the sun and moon. (Heard only once.)

(3) The husband of *Biliku* is *Perǰido* and her children are *Totaimo*, *Mite* (cicada) and *Tarai*.

(4) *Biliku* is unmarried, but she has a son *Perǰido*, and her other children are *Tǫrǫi*, *Čelene*, *Čotǫt*, and *Čerei*. These four are the names of birds.

(5) *Biliku* is the wife of *Tarai*. Their children are *Tǫrǫi*, *Taka*, *Čotǫt*, *Poruatǫko*, *Kelil*, *Cǫpcura*, *Benye*, *Biratkoro*, *Čereo*, *Milidu*, *Bobelo*, *Kǫlo*. These are all names of birds.

(6) *Biliku* has a husband *Tǫrǫi* (a bird). *Tarai* has a wife *Kelil* (a bird).

In the *Aka-Kede* tribe the most common statement, at any rate in the northern part of the tribe, is that *Bilika* is female, and that *Tarai* is male. One *Aka-Kede* man, from the southern part of the tribe said that *Bilika* was male.

In the *Aka-Kǫl* and *A-Pučikwar* tribes *Bilik* is generally spoken of as being male, and *Teriya* is also male. Other versions from these tribes are as follows:—

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(1) *Bilik* is female and *Teriya* is her husband. Their children are the winds, *Čoliatum Bilik*, *Mętepur Bilik*, and *Wǫičo-l'arpat Bilik*.

(2) There is a male *Bilik* and a female *Bilik*, who are husband and wife. Their children are *Kǫičǫr-tǫŋ Bilik*, *Kǫičo Bilik*, *Jila Bilik*, *Mętepur Bilik*, *Rartear Bilik*, and *Teriya*. These are the winds.

(3) *Bilik* is male. His wife is *In Čaria*, and their children are *Kao* (prawn) and *Mǫrua* (the sky).

In the *Akar-Bale* tribe the most usual statement is that both *Puluga* and *Daria* are male, and this was apparently also the common belief of the *Aka-Bea*.

In the North Andaman the name *Biliku* is also the word for "spider," but no meaning (save as the name of the mythical being) was discovered for the name *Tarai*. In the South and Middle Andaman no meaning was discovered, either for the name *Bilik* or *Puluga*, or for the name *Teriya* or *Deria*. Although this book does not deal with the Little Andaman, it is worth while to mention that there also the natives believe in a mythical person who lives in the north-east and sends the storms. This being is female and is named *Ōluga*. The monitor lizard is also called *ōluga* in the language of the Little Andaman. It is obvious, however, that the names *Biliku*, *Puluga*, *Ōluga* are all of them different forms of the same word.

As we have already seen, it is *Biliku* and *Tarai* who send the winds. *Tarai* sends the south-west wind, which brings the rain. *Biliku* sends the other winds which bring either fine weather, or, at times, violent storms. One *Akar-Bale* account of the matter (literally translated as told to me) is as follows. "Once upon a time *Puluga* and *Daria* were great friends, but they quarrelled. *Puluga* said that he was the bigger (more important). *Daria* said that he was. So now they are always quarrelling. *Puluga* sends the wind for one period. Then *Daria* sends his wind."

According to the statement of an *Akar-Bale* man, *Puluga* makes the wind by fanning with a very large *kwar-toŋ* leaf.

Rain and thunder and lightning that come with the south-west wind are believed to be due to *Tarai*. Storms that come

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776 821 during the season connected with *Biliku* are made by *Biliku* and are due to her anger. When a big storm comes the natives say "*Biliku* is angry." Lightning is explained as being a fire-brand thrown by *Biliku* across the sky when she is angry, and thunder is said to be her voice growling. Another explanation of lightning is that it is a pearl-shell, called *be* in the North Andaman, thrown by *Biliku*, the bright flash of the mother-of-pearl being seen as it crosses the sky. Still another statement from the North Andaman is that *Biliku* makes the lightning by striking a pearl-shell (*be*) against a stone.

Although *Biliku* is generally mentioned when a native is asked about lightning, yet *Tarai* also wields the lightning and the thunder. On one occasion when I was talking to a native I referred to the thunder and lightning that were at the moment coming up from the south-west, making a remark to the effect that *Biliku* was getting angry about something, and was corrected by him with "No, that is *Tarai*."

776 821 784 There are a certain number of actions that are believed by the natives to arouse the anger of *Biliku* (*Puluga*), and thereby cause storms. There are three of these that are of importance.

(1) Burning or melting bees'-wax.

(2) Killing a cicada, or making a noise, particularly a noise of cutting or banging wood, during the time that the cicada is "singing" in the morning and evening.

(3) The use of certain articles of food, of which the chief are the seeds of the *Entada scandens*, the pith of the *Caryota sobolifera*, two species of *Dioscorea* (yam), and certain edible roots, of which may be mentioned those called in *Aka-Jeru labo*, *mikulu*, *ji* and *loito*.

In this matter there is an entire unanimity of belief in all the tribes of the Great Andaman. All the natives agree in saying that any of these three actions causes the anger of *Biliku* or *Puluga* and so brings bad weather.

The natives do, as a matter of fact, melt all the bees'-wax they obtain, in order to purify it, and render it suitable for use in the various ways in which they employ it. Also they do make use of all the plants mentioned under (3) whenever they are in season. They give various explanations of this variance

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between their precepts and their actions. Some of my informants said that though these actions may bring rain and storms, yet they would rather submit to the bad weather than go without some of their most prized vegetable foods. Others again say that there is always a chance that *Biliku* may not notice that the plants have been disturbed, particularly if no fragments are left lying about the camp, and if, when taking the roots, the creepers are not disturbed. Another statement is that it is really only during the season of storms, called the *Kimil* season in *Aka-Jeru*, that it is dangerous to eat these foods, that is, during the months of October and November. After this season has passed there is no longer any danger of violent storms and the foods in question may be freely eaten. Nevertheless the natives do eat these foods in the months of October and November.

Mr Man records the native beliefs about bees'-wax and the plants in question. "There is an idea current that if during the first half of the rainy season they eat the *Caryota sobolifera*, or pluck or eat the seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, or gather yams or other edible roots, another deluge would be the consequence, for *Puluga* is supposed to require these for his own consumption at that period of the year; the restriction, however does not extend to the fallen seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, which may be collected and eaten at any time with impunity. Another of the offences visited by *Puluga* with storms is the burning of bee's wax, the smell of which is said to be peculiarly obnoxious to him. Owing to this belief it is a common practice secretly to burn wax when a person against whom they bear ill-will is engaged in fishing, hunting, or the like, the object being to spoil his sport and cause him as much discomfort as possible; hence arises the saying amongst them, when suddenly overtaken by a storm, that some one must be burning wax[1]."

It must be noted that it is not only the "burning," but also the melting of bees'-wax that angers *Puluga*. As regards the plants mentioned by Mr Man none of these is available for food during the early part of the rainy season. At that time the yams are not formed, the pith of the *Caryota* palm is not ripe

[1] Man, *op. cit.* pp. 153, 154.

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and is uneatable, and the only available seeds of the *Entada* would be those of the last season that had not fallen from the pods or that had lain on the ground without having germinated. Thus the prohibition as stated by Mr Man amounts to nothing. The subject will be discussed in a later chapter. It may be remarked, however, that it is a fact easily to be observed that the natives do regard the gathering of these vegetable foods during the later portion of the rainy season and during the first part of the cool season (i.e. from October to December), as being an action that may offend *Biliku*. I was myself able to observe this on several occasions, as when once, at the very end of the rainy season, I, not then knowing the belief, asked a native to cut for me one of the pods of the *Entada* as a botanical specimen, whereupon the native, after fulfilling my request, explained to me that there would probably be a storm next day as the result of our action.

In all the tribes of the Great Andaman I found a belief that *Biliku* or *Puluga* will be angry if anybody makes a noise, particularly a noise of chopping, breaking or banging wood, during the time the cicada is singing. The cicada "sings" as the natives call it, during the short interval between dawn and sunrise, and during that between sunset and darkness. It is at these times that no noise may be made. The Andamanese do observe this custom, and refrain from making any noise at such times. For instance, if a man were singing, he would cease until the cicada were silent again. In all the tribes I found that this prohibition was connected in the minds of the natives with *Puluga*, the reason of the custom being always explained to me by saying that any breach of it would infallibly bring bad weather. In the North Andaman the cicada (*mitĕ*) is commonly spoken of as the "child" of *Biliku, Biliku ot-tire.*

Mr Man refers to this custom. In one place he says that the first parents of the Andamanese were told by *Puluga* "that, though they were to work in the wet months, they must not do so after sundown, because by doing so they would worry the *butu*, which are under *Puluga's* special protection. Any noise, such as working (*kopke*) with an adze, would cause the *butu's* head to ache, and that would be a serious matter. During the

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cold and dry seasons work may be carried on day and night, as the *butu* is then seldom seen, and cannot be disturbed [1]."

The *butu* here mentioned is the cicada. The prohibition is not, however, as Mr Man says, against working, but against making a noise. Nor does the prohibition against noise extend to the whole night, but only to the short interval between sunset and darkness, for it is during this interval that the cicada is singing. As soon as the cicada is silent you may make as much noise as you please.

Another reference by Mr Man to the same custom is as follows: "Between dawn and sunrise they will do no work, save what is noiseless, lest the sun should be offended and cause an eclipse, storm, or other misfortune to overtake them. If, therefore, they have occasion to start on a journey or hunting expedition at so early an hour, they proceed as quietly as possible, and refrain from the practice, observed at other times of the day, of testing the strength of their bow-strings, as the snapping noise caused thereby is one of those to which the sun objects [2]."

This is really the same prohibition as that already mentioned, against making a noise when the cicada is singing. The interesting point, which will be discussed in a later chapter, is that Mr Man's informant associated the prohibition not with *Puluga*, but with the sun. All the natives with whom I talked on the matter said that they would make no noise at such a time for fear of offending the cicada, and therefore *Puluga* or *Biliku*, and so bringing a storm.

As regards the prohibition against killing the cicada, this seems to refer only to the imago. So far as I was able to observe, the natives do carefully avoid killing the cicada in its full-grown form. On the other hand the grub of the cicada is regularly killed and eaten, being regarded as a delicacy. It is only eaten during the months of October and November.

In connection with the cicada, and with the weather, there is a rite which was described to me, but which I did not see performed. According to the account given of this rite, which is called "killing the cicada," its purpose is to produce fine weather. It takes place in December, at the end of the season

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 165. [2] *Ibid.* p. 153.

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776 821 796 during which they eat the grub. When the agreed upon for the performance of the ceremony arrives, ...e members of the community are careful to be in the camp before sunset. As soon as the sun sets and the cicadæ begin their shrill cry, all the men, women and children present begin to make as much noise as they possibly can, by banging on the sounding-board, striking the ground with bamboos, beating pieces of wood together, or hammering on the sides of canoes, while at the same time shouting. They continue the noise, which entirely drowns that of the cicada, until after darkness has fallen. The rite may be performed, I believe, two or more times, on successive evenings. My informant explained the rite by saying that the natives have been eating the cicada, and the rite is intended to "kill" those that are left. After the rite the cicada disappears and is not seen or heard for some weeks, and there follow four months of fine weather with little rain.

776 821 784 The beliefs relating to bees'-wax, to the various edible roots, and to the cicada, are the same in all the Great Andaman tribes, and are by far the most important of those connected with *Biliku*. In the North Andaman ***Biliku*** is supposed to be angry if any one kills a *biliku* (spider) a *reo* (a species of insect making a noise like a cicada, during the daytime, which I often heard, but never saw), or a *čatlo* (a species of beetle). There is also a bird, which I was not able to identify, called *ṭoṛoi*, which belongs to *Biliku* and may not be killed.

In the *A-Pučikwar* tribe it is said that two species of fish, called *unakoro* and *liwat* belong to ***Bilik*** and may not be killed. A mollusc, called *towa*, also belongs to ***Bilik***, and is for that reason never eaten. A bird called ***Bilik-ṭar-dala*** (probably the same bird that is called *ṭoṛoi* in the North Andaman) may not be killed.

In the *Akar-Bale* tribe I was told that two kinds of wood, *bukura* and *worago*, must not be used for firewood, for fear of offending *Puluga*, to whom they belong. ***Bukura*** is a species of *Diospyros* (ebony).

776 821 789 The only punishment that ***Biliku*** ever inflicts on human beings when she is angry with them for any reason, is to send violent storms. The way to stop a storm seems to be to frighten

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Biliku. One means of doing this is to throw the leaves of the *Mimusops littoralis* in the fire. These leaves explode with the heating of the juices and make a crackling or popping noise, which it is said that *Biliku* dislikes. I believe, however, that if any one were thus to burn *Mimusops* leaves during fine weather, it would be regarded as likely to cause a storm. The most efficacious means of stopping a storm is to do some of the things that *Biliku* most dislikes. To burn bees'-wax, or to go into the jungle and damage or destroy the creepers that belong to her, these are the heroic remedies against *Biliku's* anger.

The question of the Andamanese beliefs about storms is complicated by the fact that although all storms are said to be made by *Puluga* or *Biliku*, yet there is an alternative and contradictory belief that storms are made by the spirits of the sea (*Jurua*). It is said that if a piece of the *Anadendron paniculatum* creeper were to be burnt there would be a great cyclone, but this appears to be associated, not with *Biliku*, but with the spirits of the sea. It will be shown later that there is a special connection between the *Jurua* and this plant. The belief that a storm will arise if turtle fat be allowed to burn in the fire seems also to be connected with the *Jurua* and not with *Biliku*. The same is probably the case with a belief that rain will come if a *Ficus laccifera* tree be damaged.

Some of the methods used to stop storms are also probably connected with the spirits and not with *Biliku*. One such method is to go into the sea and swish arrows about in the water. One *oko-jumu* (medicine-man) of the North Andaman is reputed to have stopped a big cyclone by taking a few pieces of *Anadendron paniculatum* and crushing them, and then diving into the sea and placing the crushed creeper under a stone. An *oko-jumu* who died while I was in the islands is supposed to have been able to stop a storm by similarly placing leaves and twigs of the *Ficus laccifera* (*reŋko*) under a rock in the sea.

To complete the account of this part of the Andamanese beliefs it is necessary to quote what Mr Man writes about the tribes of the South Andaman. Mr Man describes *Puluga* as a "Supreme Being" and says that some of the beliefs of the Andamanese relating to him "approximate closely to the true

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faith concerning the Deity." Mr Portman, following Mr Man, in this as in many other matters, translates the name *Puluga* by the English word "God." Mr Man's statements are as follows :—

"Of *Puluga* they say that—

"I. Though His appearance is like fire, yet He is (nowadays) invisible.

"II. He was never born and is immortal.

"III. By him the world and all objects, animate and inanimate were created, excepting only the powers of evil.

"IV. He is regarded as omniscient while it is day, knowing even the thoughts of their hearts.

"V. He is angered by the commission of certain sins, while to those in pain or distress he is pitiful, and sometimes deigns to afford relief.

"VI. He is the Judge from whom each soul receives its sentence after death, and to some extent, the hope of escape from the torments of *Jereg-l'ar-mugu* is said to affect their course of action in the present life.

"*Puluga* is believed to live in a large stone house in the sky, with a wife whom he created for himself: she is green in appearance and has two names, *Čana Aulola* (Mother Fresh-water Shrimp), and *Čana Palak* (Mother Eel); by her he has a large family, all, except the eldest, being girls; these last, known as *morowin* (sky spirits or angels), are said to be black in appearance, and, with their mother, amuse themselves from time to time by throwing fish and prawns into the streams and sea for the use of the inhabitants of the world. *Puluga*'s son is called *Pijčor*: he is regarded as a sort of archangel, and is alone permitted to live with his father, whose orders it is his duty to make known to the *morowin*.

"*Puluga* is said to eat and drink, and, during the dry months of the year, to pass much of his time in sleep, as is proved by his voice (thunder) being rarely heard at that season; he is the source whence they receive all their supplies of animals, birds, and turtles; when they anger him he comes out of his house and blows, and growls, and hurls burning faggots at them—in other words, visits their offences with violent thunderstorms and heavy squalls; except for this purpose he seldom leaves home,

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unless it be during the rains, when he descends to earth to provide himself with certain kinds of food; how often this happens they do not know since, nowadays, he is invisible[1]."

Mr Man's comparison between the Andamanese belief in *Puluga* and the Christian belief in a God, will be discussed in a later chapter when we come to deal with the interpretation of the Andamanese beliefs. It is to be noted that Mr Man does not make any reference to *Deria* (*Tarai*), nor does he mention the association of *Puluga* with the north-east.

As regards the personal appearance of *Puluga*, the statements of different informants are not in agreement. One *A-Pučikwar* man described *Bilik* as being very big, about the height of one of the posts of my hut (which was eighteen feet), white-skinned like a European, having a long beard, and carrying a bow of the *Jarawa* type.

The legends connecting *Puluga* with the creation of the world will be given in the next chapter.

I am not able to confirm Mr Man's statement that *Puluga* is omniscient, and in fact there are some customs of the natives that are in contradiction with any such belief. When they dig up yams (which belong to *Puluga*) they take the tuber and replace the "crown" with the attached stem in the ground, and explain this by saying that if they do so *Puluga* will not notice that the yam has been taken. Whenever they do any of the things that displease *Puluga*, they seem to believe that there is a possibility that *Puluga* may not discover what has been done. It may be noted that there is no means of distinguishing in Andamanese between "all" and "a great deal." Thus a statement the *Puluga* knows "everything" may be equally well translated "*Puluga* knows a great deal." Between these two statements there is no difference for the Andamanese, but there is a great difference for us, and for this reason the use of the word "omniscient" is misleading.

Mr Man says that *Puluga* "is angered by the commission of certain sins." In this connection it is necessary to refer to another passage in Mr Man's work. "That they are not entirely devoid of moral consciousness may, I think, in some

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 157.

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776 measure, be demonstrated by the fact of their possessing a word, *yub-da*, signifying sin or wrong-doing, which is used in connection with falsehood, theft, grave assault, murder, adultery, and—burning wax (!), which deeds are believed to anger *Puluga-la*, the Creator[1]." Although I made very careful and repeated enquiries, I was unable to meet with a single native who believed that such actions as the murder of one man by another, or adultery, aroused the anger of *Puluga*. The only actions at which *Puluga* is angry are those purely ritual offences, such as burning or melting wax, killing a cicada, digging up yams, etc., which have already been mentioned.

The Andamanese beliefs connected with the life after death will be described later in the present chapter.

As regards the "stone house" in which *Puluga* is said to live, this really means, I believe, a cave. In the North Andaman *Biliku* is frequently spoken of as living in a cave (*ɛra-poŋ*). Also, it may be recalled, the sky is generally regarded as consisting of stone or rock, and it is in the sky the *Puluga* lives.

The son of *Puluga*, mentioned by Mr Man, *Pijĭor*, is a being about whom I was able to learn very little. In the North Andaman the same being is named *Perĭido*, and is said to be the son of *Biliku*. The *Morowin*, whom Mr Man describes as the daughters of *Puluga*, are sky spirits. The most usual belief in the South Andaman is that there are both male and female *Morowin*. They are beings of somewhat the same nature as the jungle spirits and the sea spirits. An *Akar-Bale* informant told me, "The *Morua* are sky spirits. They eat only pork and nothing else. They are angry if pork is roasted, and make the people ill. They used to live in the big *baja* (*Sterculia*) trees, but now they live in the sky."

776 784 In this connection it may be mentioned that there is a belief throughout the Andamans that it is dangerous to roast pork. In the North Andaman the natives commonly say that the spirits of the jungle are angry if pork be roasted, and may be attracted to the spot and cause the natives to be ill. An *Akar-Bale* belief, connecting the danger with the spirits of the sky has just been mentioned. Mr Man's version of the matter is as follows :—

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 112.

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"...there is a company of evil spirits who are called *čol*, and who are much dreaded. They are believed to be descendants of *Maia Čol* who lived in antediluvian times. They generally punish those who offend them by baking or roasting pig's flesh, the smell of which is particularly obnoxious to them, as it is also to *Puluga*, who therefore, often assists them in discovering the delinquent; the same risk does not attend *boiling* pork, which the olfactory nerves of the fastidious *čol* are not keen enough to detect. While the Andamanese say that they are liable to be struck by *Erem-čauga-la* or *Juruwin* at any time or in any place, the *čol* strike those only who offend them, and that during the day while they are stationary, this being necessitated by the distance from the earth of their abode, whence they hurl their darts; an invisible spear is the weapon they always use, and this is thrown with unerring aim at the head of their victims, and is invariably fatal. As these demons are considered especially dangerous on the hottest days, they are apparently held accountable for the deaths from sunstroke which happen from time to time[1]."

It may be remarked that *Čol* is the name of a species of bird (probably the racket-tailed drongo), which is named from its call—*čol, čol, čol*. I did not hear the name used to denote what Mr Man calls demons, except in so far as the birds themselves are supposed to have supernatural powers. There is, perhaps, some sort of connection between the *čol* (the birds, that is) and the sky-spirits, *Morowin* or *Morua*, but I was not able to satisfy myself on the point. The connection of them both with *Puluga* is still more obscure.

Another belief in connection with pigs is that any person who cuts up a pig badly is liable to be punished. Mr Man states, on this subject, "*Puluga* never himself puts any one to death, but he objects so strongly to seeing a pig badly quartered and carved that he invariably points out those who offend him in this respect to a class of malevolent spirits called *Čol*, one of whom forthwith despatches the unfortunate individual[2]."

I was not able to find any evidence that *Puluga* is believed to be angry if a pig is badly quartered. From the natives with

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 159. [2] *Ibid.* p. 158.

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whom I talked on the subject I received two different statements. One was to the effect that if a pig is badly cut up the meat will be bad and anyone who eats it will be ill. The other was that if a pig is badly cut up the spirits of the jungle will be angry and will punish the offender. In neither case was there any reference to *Puluga* or *Biliku*.

In general it may be said that the natives believe that the only punishment that *Puluga* or *Biliku* ever sends against those who offend him or her in any way is bad weather, and I did not myself meet with any exception to this rule.

One other observation by Mr Man may be mentioned. He says, "When they see a dark cloud approaching at a time when rain would prove very inconvenient, as when hunting, travelling, etc., they advise *Puluga* to divert its course by shouting '*Wara-ǰobo kopke, kopke, kopke*' (*Wara-ǰobo* will bite, bite, bite (you)). If in spite of this a shower falls they imagine that *Puluga* is undeterred by their warning[1]."

It is clear from the above discussion of the matter that there is not any complete agreement in the beliefs concerning *Puluga* (*Biliku*) even in any one tribe of the Andamans. There are many different statements about this being which cannot be made consistent with one another without doing violence to the evidence. At the same time, amid all the differences and inconsistencies there are a certain number of points about which there is a general agreement throughout the whole of the tribes of the Great Andaman. One of these is the connection of *Puluga* and *Daria* with the weather, with the two chief winds, and with the points of the compass from which these winds blow. The other is the belief that certain actions, such as melting bees'-wax, digging up yams, etc., are disliked by *Puluga*, and are punished by him (or her) with stormy weather. On these matters there is entire agreement amongst the natives of all the tribes, and they are to the natives themselves by far the most important part of the beliefs concerning *Puluga*.

We have seen that the Andamanese believe in two different kinds of what may be called, for want of a better term, super-

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 153.

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natural beings. In the first place there are the spirits, the *Lau* or *Čauga*, and the *Jurua*, inhabiting the forest and the sea respectively. These are all associated by the natives with ghosts, i.e. with the spirits of dead men and women. In the second place there are other beings connected with the sun and moon, lightning and thunder and the monsoons (*Biliku* and *Tarai*). These are all associated with the phenomena of nature. There are many points of contact between these two classes of beings. Thus there are two alternative explanations of bad weather, one that it is due to the spirits (particularly the spirits of the sea), the other that it is due to the anger of *Biliku*. This is a point that will be referred to again in a later chapter.

It is possible that there are beliefs in other supernatural beings who are neither spirits of the dead nor connected with natural phenomena. The only being of such a nature that I was able to discover anything about is one called *Nila* or *Ńila*. This is the name of an evil being who is supposed to live in hollow *Pterocarpus* trees. When he smells human beings near his tree he comes out and kills them with his knife. I found this belief in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe, but was not able to find any trace of a similar belief in the North Andaman, though of course I cannot say that it does not exist there. Mr Man mentions this same being. "This spirit *Nila* is supposed to live in ant-hills, and to have neither wife nor child; he is not regarded as such a malevolent personage as *Erem-čauga-la*, and, though he is always armed with a knife, he rarely injures human beings with it, or when he does so, it is not in order to feed upon their bodies, for he is said to eat earth only[1]." Mr Man adds, in a footnote that "cases have been cited of persons who have been found stabbed, whose deaths have been attributed to *Nila*: the possibility of the individuals in question having been murdered is scouted."

The version given by Mr Man is not quite in agreement with the information given to me, but I was unfortunately not able to learn anything more about the nature of *Nila*.

As throwing some additional light on the way in which the Andamanese think of the supernatural beings that have been

[1] Man, *op. cit.* p. 159.

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mentioned above, I add here a brief description of a sort of dramatic or pantomimic dance that I witnessed in the North Andaman. Many savage tribes in different parts of the world are in the habit of performing dances or pantomimes in which the performer represents a supernatural being. In the Andamans there are no regular performances of this kind. The solitary one that I witnessed was entirely exceptional.

The performer was a man named *Kobo*. This man, according to the statements of the natives, had, at one time of his life, died and come back to life again. Owing to this fact he was endowed with special magical powers, and had some reputation as a magician or medicine-man (*oko-jumu*). During the time that he was dead (probably a few hours of unconsciousness), he is supposed to have visited the world of spirits, and while there he saw many things and learnt much about the spirits. Among other things he witnessed a dance in which the spirits and other supernatural beings took part. All these things he was able to remember when he returned to life.

The performance was given one afternoon on the ordinary dancing ground of the village. The performer sat on his haunches in a hut at one end of the dancing ground. Thrust into the back of his belt he wore a bunch of leaves sticking out somewhat after the manner of a cock's tail, but he had no other ornament. The spectators, consisting of men, women and children, were seated round the edge of the dancing ground, which had been swept clean. On one side sat a few women who acted as chorus. There was no sounding-board.

The performer began to sing a song, composed on the model of the songs of the South Andaman (with a short refrain) which has now for some years been adopted by the Northern tribes in preference to their own. As he finished the song the women of the chorus took up the refrain, repeating it over and over again, and marking time by clapping their hands on their thighs. The performer came out of his hut and performed a dance. At a signal from him the chorus ceased and he returned to his hut. In this way he sang several songs, repeating each one several times, and performed a number of short dances. In nearly every case the step of the dance was some simple modification

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of the step in common use at an ordinary dance. Thus in one dance he danced very violently and pretended to hurt his leg through the violence of his dancing, making angry signs to the chorus to stop their clapping, of which, of course, they took no notice. In another dance he stopped at short intervals and violently scratched his sides and then doubled himself up with laughter. In yet another, he danced with the step of the women's dance, covering his face with his hands and pretending to be very bashful. In still another he stood on tiptoe on the right foot and stamped with his left foot in time to the chorus of women. In some of the dances he walked round the open space within the circle of spectators, sometimes in a crouching attitude, and at other times in other attitudes. All these dances aroused great amusement amongst the spectators. It was unfortunately impossible for me to understand them all or to obtain an adequate explanation of them either at the time or later.

Of the songs that were sung one was "The tide has gone down over the reef. I walk round the world. There is great wind and rain."

Some of these dances I was able to understand even without explanation. One of them represented *Biliku*. The performer held in his right hand a shell, and as he danced grotesquely round the open space he looked fiercely at the spectators and threatened to throw the shell at them. Many of the women and children could not prevent themselves from starting backwards when he thus threatened them, but their fears were immediately dispelled in laughter. The shell was not a pearl-shell (*be*) but a *Cyrena* shell (*bun*), but I believe that this was because there was no pearl-shell available. The representation of *Biliku* was thus reduced to a single gesture, that of threatening the natives with her pearl-shell (lightning).

Another dance represented the jungle spirits (*Bido-teč Lau*). In this he first hid himself behind a screen of *bido* leaves (*Calamus tigrinus*) that had been prepared, singing a song. The leaves represented a clump of the *Calamus* palm such as is supposed to be the favourite haunt of the jungle spirits. After having sung for some time behind his screen of leaves, he came

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776 535 out with a bow and arrow in his hand, and as he danced in front of the spectators he pretended to shoot at them.

In another dance he represented *Ele*, the lightning. He sat on a stone that had been placed in the middle of the open space, swinging his arms to the time of the chorus, and every now and then shaking his leg.

This observation is an important one in several ways. Although I asked the man to repeat it, in order that I might make fuller notes and obtain explanations of many obscure points, and although he grudgingly said that he would, yet he did not do so. He was, moreover, very reserved over the matter, and not very willing to talk about his own performance.

I believe that the performance was an entirely exceptional affair. I never at any other time either saw or heard of one man or even several men, giving a dance for the amusement of others. I think that the whole thing was entirely the invention of the performer. He had given the same performance, or one very similar, at least once before the occasion on which I saw it.

We may now turn to the Andamanese beliefs relating to the soul and the life after death.

161 775 766 The vital principle is at different times identified by the Andamanese with the pulse, the breath, with the blood and with the fat, particularly the kidney-fat. Thus the body of a slain enemy is burnt so that the blood and fat may be consumed in smoke and ascend to the sky where they will no longer be a danger to those who have slain him.

822 828 774 The nearest approach to our notion of a soul that the natives possess is their belief concerning the double or reflection seen in a mirror. In the Northern tribes the word *ot-jumulo* means "reflection," and also "shadow," and is also nowadays applied to a photograph. The word *ot-jumu*, in the same languages, means "a dream" or "to dream." We may perhaps translate the word *ot-jumulo* as meaning "soul." In the *Aka-Bea* language *ot-yolo* is "reflection," while there is a different word, *ot-diya* or *ot-lere*, for "shadow," and neither of the words has any connection with the word "dream" which is *taraba*. Mr Man translates the word *ot-yolo* as "soul."

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Andaman Islander feels about the fire as being the one thing on which the society most completely depends for its welfare. 182X

The preceding analysis has shown that the legends relating to the origin of animals, whether through the action of fire, or by the flood, serve to express the social value of fire. If this interpretation be correct we have a close parallel to the explanation of the story of the origin of night. In both cases, it has been argued, what the legend really expresses is the way in which a particular phenomenon (fire, in one case, the alternation of day and night in the other) affects the life of the society and the sentiments on which that life depends. The legends of the catastrophe, however, obviously contain another element of importance, revealing as they do a certain way of thinking about the animals. This element has not yet been explained. The representation of the birds, etc., as ancestors is not confined to one particular legend or group of legends, but runs through them all. Its explanation is therefore better postponed until we come to deal with the general features of the mythology, and will then have to be undertaken.

Let us now turn to the legends that concern *Biliku* (*Puluga*) and *Tarai* (*Deria*), which are of capital importance in the Andaman mythology. The clue to the understanding of them lies in the Andamanese notions about the weather and the seasons. In the Andaman Islands the year may be divided into four seasons. There is the cool season lasting from the beginning of December to the middle of February; immediately following this is the hot season from February to the middle of May; then comes the rainy season, from May to the end of September; October and November constitute a short season to themselves. In the cool season the weather is uniformly cool; there is very little rain, and storms are almost unknown; the wind blows uniformly from the N.E. In the hot season there is little or no rain; the wind is generally N.E., but may be variable; summer lightning is frequent, but there are no violent storms except at the very end of the season. During the rainy season, after a short period of uncertain stormy weather with which it begins, the wind blows uniformly from the S.W.; it rains heavily, sometimes every day for weeks together, but 182X 132 776

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violent storms (cyclones) are very rare. Between the rainy season proper and the cool season there is a period of six or eight weeks in which the weather is unsettled; the wind is variable; fine weather alternates with storms that are sometimes of terrific violence; waterspouts are frequent; it is at this season that violent cyclonic storms are likely to occur. This season is called by the Andamanese *Kimil* (*Gumul* of *Aka-Bea*). We have seen in the last chapter that the word *kimil* denotes a condition of social danger, or of contact with the power possessed by all things that can affect the life and safety of the society. It is obviously in this sense, and not as meaning "hot," that it is applied to the season in question, for the months of October and November are fairly cool, certainly very much cooler than February and March. We shall find that this is an important point in connection with the *Biliku* myth.

The life of the Andaman Islander is profoundly affected by the alternation of the seasons. There are, first of all, the violent cyclonic storms that occasionally occur. Such a storm may uproot the jungle for miles, making it impassable for years to come, and thus destroying some of the native hunting grounds. The wind is sometimes so violent as to tear every leaf from the trees in its path. While the storm lasts there is danger to the lives of the natives. An old man recounted to me how on the occasion of a violent cyclone he and the others of his village took refuge in the sea and on the open shore from the danger of falling trees, and remained there till the violence of the storm had abated. The usual name for a cyclone in *Aka-Jeru* is *ṭoko-poṛ*, i.e. "falling wood" or "falling trees." Even if all the natives escape the danger of death or injury, there is still the extreme fear and discomfort of the experience. If a storm lasts for any length of time the natives, who are unable or afraid to go out hunting, have to do without food until it is over. Incidentally the storm may destroy their huts, canoes, and other property and thus cause loss that has to be made up by toil.

The second important effect of the seasons on the life of the Andamanese is through the food supply. During the cool season, and the succeeding hot season, a number of vegetable foods, including the very important roots and some of the most

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prized fruits, are available. On the other hand, during these seasons the land animals are in poor condition. In the hot season, at any rate, lizards, snakes and the civet-cat are not eaten. Pigs are breeding and are in such poor condition that often a pig that has been killed is left in the jungle as being not good enough to eat. The hot season is pre-eminently the season of honey, which is so abundant that the natives are able to obtain much more than they can consume. In the rainy season there are few vegetable foods and very little honey, but on the other hand the jungle animals are in good condition and flesh food is abundant; fish are more plentiful in this season than during the dry weather. In the *Kimil* season (October and November) the natives add to their food supply two varieties of grub (the larvæ of the cicada and of a beetle) which are regarded as great delicacies. Roughly we can say that the rainy season is the season of flesh food, the *Kimil* season is the season of grubs, the cool season is the season of fruits and roots, and the hot season is the season of honey.

By reference to the prevailing wind the year may be divided into two parts, the N.E. monsoon from November to May, and the S.W. monsoon from May to November.

I propose to show that the Andaman Islanders express the social value of the phenomena of the weather and the seasons, i.e., the way these phenomena affect the social life and the social sentiments, by means of legends and beliefs relating to the two mythical beings whom they call *Biliku* and *Tarai*. Using the word personification in a sense to be defined later in the chapter, we may say that the Andamanese personify the weather and the seasons in the persons of *Biliku* and *Tarai*. *Biliku* is associated with the N.E. monsoon; she lives in the N.E.; the wind from that quarter is called "the *Biliku* wind"; to *Biliku*, therefore, belong the cool and the hot seasons, these being the seasons of the N.E. monsoon. *Tarai* is associated with the S.W. monsoon; he lives in the S.W.; the wind from that quarter is called "the *Tarai* wind," or, in *Aka-Bea*, simply *Deria*; to *Tarai* therefore belongs the rainy season. It is possible to show that the Andaman Islanders associate with these two beings all the phenomena of the weather and the seasons, and are able to

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represent the changes of the latter as though they were the actions of human or anthropomorphic beings.

In the mass of beliefs and stories relating to *Biliku* and *Tarai* there are some elements on which there is absolute agreement in all the tribes of the Great Andaman Division. I propose to treat these as being the most important elements. There is absolute unanimity, for instance, as to the connection of *Biliku* and *Tarai* with the N.E. and the S.W. respectively, and with the winds that blow from these two points of the compass. Further, this belief does not conflict in any way with any other belief of the Andamanese. There is similar unanimity in the beliefs that *Biliku* is angry at the digging up of yams, and at the melting of bees'-wax. There are other matters on which the agreement is fairly general but not absolute. For instance, there is a common belief that it was *Biliku* who first discovered fire, but there are also legends as to the origin of fire in which *Biliku* does not figure. I propose to treat such elements as these as being of secondary importance. Finally there are other elements with regard to which the beliefs of different tribes are not in agreement. For instance, in the South Andaman *Puluga* is regarded as male, while in the North Andaman *Biliku* is female. I propose to regard such elements as being of only minor importance, i.e., as not being closely connected with the central notion or notions expressed in the myth.

Applying the strict method outlined above, we may begin by noting that there is complete unanimity in regard to the connection of *Biliku* and *Tarai* with the N.E. and the S.W. respectively, and therefore with the monsoons. No interpretation of the myth can be adequate unless it sets out from this fact. The connection is so firmly fixed that it appears in the names of the winds themselves[1]. Even in this matter of the winds, however, there is a slight difference in the detail of the beliefs in different tribes. In the North Andaman it would seem that only the two principal winds are recognized: the S.W. wind (more accurately W.S.W.) is called "the *Tarai*

[1] It appears also in geographical names. *Puluga-ṭar-mugu*, meaning 'the Puluga front' is the name of a part of the Archipelago facing the N.E. and means 'the side facing Puluga.'

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wind" (not, be it noted, "the wind of *Tarai*"); the N.E. (or more accurately N.N.E.) wind is called "the *Biliku* wind." These two winds are by far the most important, as the former blows steadily throughout the rainy season and the latter blows with almost equal steadiness throughout a good part of the cool and hot seasons. In the *Aka-Bea* and *Akar-Bale* tribes the general belief seems to be precisely the same as in the North Andaman. Only the two principal winds are considered to be of importance and one is associated with *Deria* and the other with *Puluga*. In these two tribes, as in the North Andaman, practically no notice is taken of the existence of winds from other quarters. In the *A-Pučikwar* tribe there is a notable difference, of great importance to the true interpretation of the legend. There is a dual division of the winds; the S.W. wind is called *Teria*; the other winds (of which a number are recognized) are all called *Bilik*. Thus *Bilik* is a generic name for a number of winds, namely for all the northerly or easterly winds, including not only the N.E., but also the N.W. and S.E. winds. The S.W. wind is called by a simple name, *Teria*, or as it would be better rendered in English "the *Teria*." The other winds are called by compound names such as *Metepur Bilik*, *Koičo Bilik*, etc., which we can only translate as "the N.E. *Bilik*," "the East *Bilik*," etc.

Two things of importance are shown by the consideration of these facts. The first is that there is a sense in which it may be said that the Andaman Islanders personify the winds in the persons of *Biliku* and *Tarai*; they apply to the natural phenomenon a name which is also the name of a mythological person, and they apply it directly and not in a possessive form, i.e., they say "the *Bilik*" or "the *Biliku* wind" and not "*Biliku's* wind." The second is that only the S.W. wind is associated with *Tarai* and all the other winds are associated with *Biliku*.

The last point is one of considerable importance in the interpretation of the myth. If we divide the year by reference to the prevailing winds, then the rainy season, with the exception of its beginning and its end, belongs to the S.W. wind; the hot season (save its end) and the cool season may be regarded as belonging to the N.E. wind, though the wind may be variable in the hot season; there remain two portions of the year, at the

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change of the monsoon, when the wind is variable, which cannot be classified as belonging strictly to the S.W., or to the N.E. wind. The fact that all these variable winds are denoted in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe by the name *Bilik* shows that in this tribe they are all classified with the N.E. wind. In this way the year is divided into two slightly unequal parts, one belonging to *Teria* or *Tarai* including the whole of the rainy season except the end and the very beginning, the other belonging to *Bilik* (*Biliku*) including the *Kimil* season, the cool season, the hot season, and even the first few days of the rainy season. This strict division only appears in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe, but it will be shown that an approximation to the same notion is found in the other tribes.

There is general agreement in all the tribes in the belief that storms are due to *Biliku* or *Tarai*. Both of them send rain and thunder and lightning, but whenever mention is made in the legends of a violent storm it is always *Biliku* who is mentioned as causing it, and never by any chance *Tarai*. Thus, in regard to this matter of storms, it is evident that *Biliku* is more important than *Tarai*, and this is only one example of the preponderance of *Biliku* over her consort. This preponderance will need to be explained as one of the essentials of the myth[1].

We have already seen how the Andaman Islander represents any natural phenomenon having negative social value as though it were the result of the action of a person in anger, this being the one anti-social passion with which he is most familiar in his own life. Thus the withdrawing of the light of the moon after the full is explained as being due to the anger of the moon. The negative social value of a violent storm is obvious. In accordance with the general principles of his mythology the Andaman Islander therefore explains the storm as being due to the anger of a personal mythical being. But storms are intimately connected with the winds, so that it must be *Biliku* and *Tarai* (in whom the winds are personified) who are responsible for the storms. Further, in the Andamans, violent storms are very rare except at two special periods of the year, at the

[1] Although it is generally believed that storms (or more exactly, violent storms or cyclones) are the results of the anger of *Biliku*, yet there is a conflicting belief that storms are made by the spirits, particularly the spirits of the sea.

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change of the monsoon. This gives a further ground of association with *Biliku* and *Tarai* between whom the seasons are divided. We have seen that in classifying the winds the natives (of one tribe at any rate) associate with *Tarai* only the steady S.W. wind which brings not cyclones and violent storms but steady rain, while all the other winds are associated with *Biliku*. If this be so it is clear that a cyclone, with its wind veering from one quarter to another, must be the work of *Biliku*. Further, if the *Biliku* season be regarded as including all the periods of variable northerly and easterly winds as well as the period of the steady N.E., then we can say that it is only in the *Biliku* period that violent storms are likely to occur. It is evident therefore that an examination of the natural phenomena themselves gives us an adequate reason for the preponderance of *Biliku* over *Tarai* in the legends. This will be made even more evident as we proceed.

Another law of the Andaman mythology is that a person, such as the moon, is never angry without cause. There are a number of actions that are believed by the Andamanese to cause the anger of *Biliku*; of these there are three of extreme importance, all the others being certainly of much less importance. It is necessary, therefore, to examine these three carefully and find their meaning.

There is absolute agreement in all the tribes with regard to the belief that *Biliku* is angry and sends bad weather when bees'-wax is melted or burnt. The season of honey is the hot season from February to May. During the rainy season scarcely any honey is to be found and that only of the inferior (black) variety. It is clear therefore that honey belongs particularly to the *Biliku* portion of the year. During the hot season honey is abundant and large quantities are collected. As the natives make use of the wax, and as this is useless till it has been melted, this is the special season of the melting of bees'-wax. At the beginning of the season the *Biliku* wind blows calmly from the N.N.E. As the season draws to a close the wind becomes variable, uncertain, and in some years violent storms occur ushering in the rains of the S.W. monsoon. Year after year the wax-melting season comes to a close in stormy weather.

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Now stormy weather and the anger of *Biliku* are, for the Andaman Islander, one and the same thing, so that to say that the anger of *Biliku* follows the melting of bees'-wax is in one sense simply a statement of actual observable fact.

Another belief about which there is absolute unanimity in all parts of the Islands is that *Biliku* is angry when certain plants are cut down or dug up. These plants include some of the most valuable vegetable foods of the Andamanese, such as the yams and the pith of the *Caryota* palm. Amongst the roots and fruits associated with *Biliku* there are one or two that were not botanically identified. All of them, however, about which I was able to obtain any information whatever, are available as food during the cool and hot seasons, and either not at all or in very small quantities during the rainy season. On the other hand, of the vegetable foods that are available during the rainy season, not one is ever mentioned as being in any way connected with *Biliku*. Further, amongst all the foods of the cool and hot seasons only those are intimately connected with *Biliku* which begin to be available during the *Kimil* season. A few examples may be mentioned. The yams and other edible roots are not found at all in the rainy season, but the tubers begin to form in the *Kimil* season (October and November) and small quantities of these roots are available for food at that time. By the time the cool season has set in the roots become abundant, and they continue to be found until well on into the hot season. All these roots are regarded as being specially connected with *Biliku* and are spoken of as her foods. The same thing applies to the *Caryota sobolifera* of which the pith is eaten either raw or cooked. The pith begins to form in the *Kimil* season, and this highly prized food is available right through the cool season. The fruit of the *Cycas*, which is another of those belonging to *Biliku*, also begins to ripen at the beginning of the cool weather. As regards the *Entada scandens*, Kurz, in his *Burmese Flora*, mentions it as seeding in the "cold season." I neglected to take note of the relation of this plant to the seasons, but the statement of Kurz may be relied on. Thus it is seen that the vegetable foods that are associated with *Biliku* are those that begin to be available for food during the *Kimil* season and are

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abundant during the cool season. Now the *Kimil* season, which is really the opening of the N.E. or *Biliku* monsoon, is the season at which cyclonic storms are likely to occur. Here again therefore, as in the case of bees'-wax, there is a definite ground of association in familiar natural phenomena. Year after year, as these foods begin to ripen and to be eaten, the islands are visited with stormy weather, sometimes of exceptional violence. When the Andaman Islander says that the stormy weather which is the sign of the anger of *Biliku* follows the digging up of yams and the cutting down of the *Caryota* palm or the gathering of the seeds of the *Cycas* or *Entada*, he is stating what is an actual fact.

The case of these vegetable foods is in one way different from that of bees'-wax. The melting of the wax goes on for some weeks before the anger of *Biliku* is finally aroused, when storms come to punish the offenders, and the change of season cuts short the supply of honey. In the case of the roots, etc., it would seem that it is only the first step that counts. The danger lies in the beginning of the season. Once the anger of *Biliku* has burst forth the bad weather ceases, the danger is past, and weeks of fine weather ensue, during which the natives may eat freely of the foods in question without fear of consequences. In this connection considerable importance may be attached to a statement made to me on more than one occasion, to the effect that the most efficient way of stopping a storm is to go into the forest and destroy the plants that belong to *Biliku*, i.e., do the very things that make her angry. We may apply this to the events of the *Kimil* season. The natives begin to dig up yams and collect other vegetable foods, and thereupon *Biliku* becomes angry and stormy weather follows. All that the natives have to do is to show sufficient persistence in continuing to eat yams, etc., and the anger of *Biliku* is bound to subside and the stormy weather to cease.

There is a third belief that is generally accepted in all parts of the Great Andaman, that *Biliku* is angry if a cicada be killed, or if a noise be made while the cicada is singing in the morning or the evening. The interpretation of this belief is made difficult by the fact that there is also an association between the cicada and the day and night. Thus Mr Man states that the prohibition

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against making a noise at dawn (while the cicada is singing) is associated not with *Puluga* but with the sun[1].

The grub of the cicada is eaten during the *Kimil* season, and at no other time of the year. Here the association is simple enough. The killing of the cicada (grub) takes place only during a brief season, and this is the season when cyclones occur. However, the grub of a beetle is eaten at the same season and yet I never heard of any connection between *Biliku* and this other grub. Certainly if there is a belief in such a connection it is very much less important than the belief relating to the cicada. Further, there is the belief that if the imago of the cicada be killed or if a noise be made while the cicada is singing, *Biliku* will be angry and will send bad weather, which is obviously not simply the result of the custom of eating the grub of the cicada during the *Kimil* season.

The relation of the cicada to *Biliku* is almost certainly due to the connection of the insect with the seasons. Unfortunately, not then recognizing the importance of the matter, I did not, while in the Andamans, take particular note of the relation of the life-cycle of the cicada to the revolution of the seasons, and I am reluctant to trust to vague memories of matters to which I did not pay special attention. Mr Man states, apparently on the authority of a native, that during the cold and dry seasons the cicada is seldom seen (and is therefore presumably also seldom heard). What I believe to be the life-cycle of the insect is as follows. During the rainy season only the adult insects are to be found. They lay their eggs at some period during the rainy season, possibly towards the end. In October and November the eggs have developed into pupæ, and it is these that the natives eat; but apparently the adult insects, or some of them, still survive at this time and are to be seen and heard. By about December the last of the adult insects die out and the grubs have not yet attained the adult form, so that there is a period during which no adult insects are either seen or heard. It is probable that the new generation makes its first appearance in adult form as soon as the first rains of the rainy season begin.

[1] Page 154.

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The essential point, on which we can base an interpretation of the myth, is that the cicada is not seen or heard during the fine weather (December to March). It probably, as stated above, makes its reappearance just at the period of the stormy weather that ushers in the rainy season. Similarly, it does not disappear until after the end of the stormy period of the *Kimil* season. (I have certainly heard and seen the insect in October, and to the best of my recollection in November also.) Thus the cicada is definitely associated with the part of the year including the rainy season and the two stormy periods at its beginning and end. I believe that this is the fundamental fact that explains the Andamanese beliefs about the connection of the insect with the weather.

I was told of a ceremony that was held at the end of the *Kimil* season in the *Akar-Bale* tribe (and possibly in other tribes also) the purpose of which was said to be to ensure fine weather for some months and which is called "Killing the cicada." The ceremony consists of doing the very thing that is believed to produce storms, viz., making a noise while the cicada is singing in the evening. As soon as the cicadæ begin to sing all the persons in camp make as much noise as they can by banging bamboos on the ground, striking the sounding-board, or hammering on the sides of canoes, thus making just the kinds of noise that are said to be most disliked by the cicada. According to the statement of my informant this ceremony results in "killing" all the cicadæ so that they are not heard again for many weeks, and while this silence lasts fine weather is assured. The meaning of this little ceremony is plain when we recall the fact that though the digging up of yams and the cutting down of the *Caryota* palm anger *Biliku* and result in storms yet sufficient persistence in these actions, and therefore in any others that are displeasing to *Biliku*, results in dispelling the bad weather. Thus it is seen that although the matter is a little more complicated, yet the belief in the connection of the cicada with *Biliku* and with bad weather can be explained on exactly the same lines as the beliefs about bees'-wax and vegetable foods. The fact that the same explanation can be given of the three most important prohibitions connected

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with *Biliku* gives a high degree of probability to the interpretation here offered. These three beliefs are the only ones of real importance. I am unable to explain the connection of *Biliku* with the species of fish, the bird and the two kinds of wood mentioned on page 156. In the North Andaman there is a definite association between *Biliku* and spiders, the generic name for "spider" being *biliku*. I believe that this could be explained on the same basis as the connection with the cicada, i.e., through the connection of spiders with the changes of the seasons, but as I unfortunately neglected to take note of the habits of the spiders of the Andamans I cannot speak with any certainty and therefore prefer not to enter into a discussion of the subject[1].

The explanation that I have to offer of these beliefs relating to *Biliku* and to the things that offend her is that they are simply the statement in a special form of observable facts of nature. The rainy season comes to an end, the wind becomes variable, yams and other vegetable products begin to ripen and are used for food, and stormy weather comes, some years bringing cyclones of exceptional violence. Then follows a period of steady N.E. winds with fine weather and abundance of vegetable foods, during which the noise of the cicada is not to be heard. Then comes the honey season, when everyone is busy collecting honey and melting bees'-wax. The wind becomes very variable, storms come, the fine weather comes to an end and the rainy season begins again. These facts affect the feelings of the Andaman Islander and he expresses his impressions by regarding all these happenings as if they were the actions of an anthropomorphic being. The vegetable products, the cicada, and the honey all belong to *Biliku*. When the yams are dug up she is angry, or in other words, storms occur; a storm

[1] The application of the name *biliku* to the spider is clearly a minor motive, and probably a late accretion. The name of the N.E. monsoon is the same in all the divisions of the Andamans about which we have information, with dialectic differences only. In the Little Andaman the form of the name is *Öluga*, and the same name is given to the monitor lizard. Presumably, therefore, there was originally one name throughout the Andamans for the N.E. monsoon (*Öluga*, *Puluga*, *Bilik*, *Biliku*, *Biliku*) and later this name was applied to the spider in the North Andaman and to the monitor lizard in the Little Andaman. It may be noted that the name of the monitor lizard varies from one language to another in the Great Andaman.

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is the anger of *Biliku*. The cessation of the song of the cicada removes one of the possible causes of the anger of *Biliku*, and therefore marks the period of fine weather. That anger appears once more when the natives busy themselves with melting bees'-wax.

It may be noted that these beliefs about *Biliku* give an expression of the social value of honey and bees'-wax and of vegetable foods such as yams. The Andaman Islands provide few fruits containing natural sugar. Yet the natives are inordinately fond of sweet things; they greatly enjoy the sugar that they now obtain from the Settlement of Port Blair. Honey, which was almost their only sweet food in former times, was therefore very greatly valued. Apart from the yams and other foods associated with *Biliku* there are very few productions of the Andamans containing starch in a palatable form. To the native who has been living during the rainy season almost entirely on meat and fish, the starchy foods of the stormy season (yams, *Caryota*, etc.) are of great value, and they are very highly prized. Thus the foods associated with *Biliku* all have a high value.

We all know how the value of an object is increased if, in order to obtain it, we have to make some considerable effort or sacrifice, or put ourselves in danger of some evil. Reversing this mental process, the Andaman Islander expresses his sense of the value of honey and yams by the statement that to obtain them he must be prepared to risk the anger of *Biliku* with its results. It was shown in the last chapter that the value of food in general is expressed in the belief that all food is more or less dangerous to eat, and that ritual precautions must be observed if the danger is to be avoided. Here in the *Biliku* myth, we have a further example of the same sort of mental process, in relation not to all foods in general but to a few foods of special value. Yet another example may be given. Roast pork is highly relished by the natives, and they believe that the roasting of pork offends certain spirits of the sky and is therefore dangerous[1].

[1] It is to be noted that these tabus connected with *Biliku* are not absolute prohibitions; they are beliefs that if certain things are done *Biliku* will be angry (i.e., there may be storms); if you do these things you must risk the danger. It is exactly the same with the roasting of pork.

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Returning now to the subject of *Biliku* as the sender of cyclones, it is necessary for the argument, even at the risk of repetition, to show (1) that this is by far the most important attribute of *Biliku*, and (2) that it follows immediately from her connection with the N.E. monsoon.

Taking the second point first, we may note, in the first place, that while *Tarai* is associated with the steady S.W. wind which blows with very little variation for months at a time, *Biliku* is associated with the variable winds of the hot season. Now a characteristic of a cyclonic storm is the way in which the wind

The line represents the position of the Andaman Islands. The larger arrows show the direction in which the cyclonic disturbance is moving. The smaller arrows show the direction of the wind.

veers from one quarter to another. Further, as most of the cyclones that cross the Andamans travel from the south-east in a north-westerly direction, and the movement of the cyclone is in a counter-clockwise direction, the first wind of a cyclonic storm when it strikes the islands comes from the north-east. This may be seen from the accompanying diagram. It is only at the very end of the storm, when the storm centre has passed, that the wind blows from the south-west. Thus it is clear that the association of cyclones with *Biliku* and not with *Tarai* is determined by the nature of the phenomena which the *Biliku-Tarai* myth sets out to explain.

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That the most important attribute of *Biliku* is her connection with the cyclones is evident when we consider the legends in which she is mentioned. In most of the legends in which her name occurs[1] she is spoken of as being angry with the ancestors, and we know that a cyclone and the anger of *Biliku* are, for the Andaman Islander, one and the same thing. In some of the stories mention is made of a great storm that *Biliku* sent which nearly destroyed the world. All through the legends we find her pictured as a being whose anger is to be feared, who has the power to destroy human life and human property. *Tarai* is never mentioned in this way, for the rains of the south-west monsoon themselves have no such power.

We are now in a position to compare the characters of *Biliku* and *Tarai* and explain their relative positions in the myth. The reason for the preponderance of *Biliku* lies in the fact that it is she who sends cyclones, while *Tarai* sends nothing more than heavy showers of rain. *Tarai* is never responsible for the destruction of life and property, whereas *Biliku* is. Thus the preponderance of *Biliku* follows from the essentials of the myth. Secondly, *Tarai* is constant, ever the same, whereas *Biliku* is changeable. The rainy season of one year is exactly like that of another, and during the time it lasts the weather is consistent throughout. On the contrary, one year the *Biliku* season brings a terrific storm, and another year it is much less violent, while, from day to day during certain parts of the *Biliku* season the weather is unsettled, so that you cannot tell what the morrow will bring with it. It is obvious that this uncertainty about the actions of *Biliku*, the fact that she cannot altogether be reckoned with, would tend to make her of greater importance in the eyes of the Andamanese than her consort *Tarai*.

Let us now consider the question of the sex of *Biliku*. On this matter there is a lack of agreement. In the North Andaman *Tarai* is declared to be male and *Biliku* female. It can readily be shown that this results from the position of *Biliku* and *Tarai*

[1] See, for instance, the Aka-Jeru legend on pages 197—198, the Aka-Kede on page 200 and that from the Akar-Bale tribe on pages 200—201, and also the legends on pages 207, 208.

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as regulating the seasons. *Tarai* rules over the rainy season, in which the chief food is the flesh of animals of the land and of the sea; it is the business of men to provide flesh-food. On the contrary *Biliku* rules over the seasons in which the chief foods are vegetable products of different kinds; it is the business of women to provide such foods. It is only men who go out hunting for pigs or turtle or who harpoon or shoot fish, and it is always the men who attend to the first part of the cooking of pig, turtle and dugong; it is the women who dig up the yams and collect the fruits and seeds, and it is the women also who cook them. There is a very real sense, then, in which flesh foods may be called the foods of men, and vegetable foods may be called the foods of women, and, since flesh foods are the foods of *Tarai* and vegetable foods are the foods of *Biliku*, there is a sound reason for calling *Tarai* male and *Biliku* female.

This way of thinking of *Biliku* as female is in harmony with her character as outlined above. Women (in the Andamans) are notoriously uncertain, changeable creatures. You can always reckon fairly well what a man will do, but not so with a woman. Moreover, when the Andaman Islander wishes to picture to himself a pair of closely associated beings, it is natural that he should compare them to the most closely associated couple with which he is familiar,—husband and wife. This tendency leads him to make the sun and moon man and wife in many of his legends, and it may well be expected to have its influence on the *Biliku* myth also.

In the South Andaman however, both *Puluga* and *Daria* are said to be male. It can be shown that this view is also appropriate in its way. The *Akar-Bale* say that *Puluga* and *Daria* were once friends, but have quarrelled and now live at opposite ends of the earth and are perpetually renewing their quarrel. *Daria* has things to himself for a few months (the S.W. monsoon) and sends his wind; then *Puluga* makes an attack on him; some weeks of unsettled weather ensue while they are fighting, until *Daria* is beaten and *Puluga* takes over the control of the weather and sends the N.E. wind. By and by, however, *Daria* shows himself again and there is another quarrel, with its unsettled and stormy weather, which ends in the

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defeat of *Puluga* and the reinstatement for a period of *Daria*. Even the bald language in which it is stated does not quite hide the poetical grandeur of this conception of the world as the arena of two battling giants in a never-ending quarrel. Those who have lived through a tropical cyclone with its wind changing from one quarter to another, its consummate violence, its sudden onslaught, its pause (that is felt to be merely a pause) as the centre of the disturbance reaches and passes you, and then its sudden renewal of the mad combat with the wind coming now from the opposite quarter, cannot but recognize in the *Akar-Bale* myth a successful attempt to describe such a storm in figurative language.

Such a combat could only be pictured by the Andamanese as taking place between two men, and the myth in this form therefore necessarily involves the belief that both *Puluga* and *Daria* are male. It is evident, therefore, that this view has some justification, that it does enable the Andaman Islander to express the feelings and impressions evoked in him by the phenomena of the weather. I venture to think, however, that the southern myth is not quite so satisfactory as the northern one, does not translate quite so well all the different features of the natural phenomena with which it deals[1].

A most important element of the myth is the connection of *Biliku* (*Puluga*) with fire. In all the tribes there are legends that represent *Biliku* as the first possessor of fire, which was, according to some versions, given by her to the ancestors, and according to others stolen from her by one of them. There can be no doubt that these legends owe their origin to the connection between *Biliku* the storm-sender and lightning.

There are several different beliefs about the lightning. According to one of these the lightning (*Ele*) and the thunder (*Korude*) are persons who produce the phenomena of the same name. Another belief is that thunder and lightning are produced by *Biliku* and *Tarai*. On the whole, it would seem that

[1] In a paper in *Folk-lore*, vol. XX, 1909, I put forward the hypothesis that probably at one time all the tribes of the Andamans regarded *Biliku* (*Puluga*) as female, and *Tarai* (*Daria*) as male. I am still inclined to think that there is some evidence for this, but a discussion of what the Andamanese beliefs may have been in the past is entirely outside the scope of this chapter and is therefore omitted.

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the latter belief is the one which is most frequently present to the minds of the natives. A man seeing lightning in the sky will say, according to the season, the prevailing wind, etc., *Biliku ćatobom*, or *Tarai ćatobom*; "*Biliku* (or *Tarai*) is at work." There are different accounts, however, of the way in which *Biliku* makes the lightning. One belief is that it is a fire-brand flung by her through the sky; a second is that it is a mother-of-pearl shell (*be*) similarly flung; yet a third statement is that she produces the lightning by striking a pearl shell (*be*) on a red stone.

There is no doubt that the Andamanese regard lightning as fire; the charring of trees struck by it is sufficient to convince them of this. Thus lightning and the sun are the only two natural fires that they know. (With the relation of *Biliku* to the sun I shall deal later.) As the wielder of lightning *Biliku* thus becomes the possessor of fire. The simplest of the different beliefs, the one following immediately from the natural phenomena, would be, therefore, that which makes the lightning a fire-brand. This is, on the whole, the one that is most usually expressed, at any rate in the South Andaman.

The explanation of lightning as a shell depends not only upon the pearly lustre of this kind of shell, but also on other features of it. The shell in question (*be*) is used by women alone, and its use is confined to slicing yams and other vegetables in preparing them for food. Its association with *Biliku* therefore follows from the view of *Biliku* as female and as being especially associated with yams and other vegetable foods. Granting this fundamental connection, then the brightness of the shell, its keen edge and the way in which it can be made to skim through the air, will explain the statement that lightning is just such a shell thrown by *Biliku*. In the South Andaman, where *Puluga* is regarded as male, this belief about the pearl shell would be out of harmony with the rest of the myth, and, as we should expect, it is not found. However, the *Aka-Bea* word for lightning (*be-iya*, the *-iya* or *-ya* being a suffix) suggests that they may have had a similar belief in the past[1].

In the North Andaman the two views of lightning as a fire-brand and as a shell are both held, because they both, in

[1] The stem *be* seems to be connected with the idea of cutting.

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different ways, fit in well with the rest of the myth. There is yet a third view in which these two contradictory beliefs are, as it were, reconciled. This is that *Biliku* produces lightning by striking a pearl shell against a red stone.

In the North Andaman the action of throwing a shell or a fire-brand is regarded as typical of *Biliku*; this is the way in which she is pictured by the native, and in which she would doubtless be portrayed if the Andamanese had a pictorial art. In the dance described in an earlier chapter, in which the dancer gave representations of various mythical beings, *Biliku* was represented by the dancer holding a shell in his hand and dancing round threatening to throw the shell at the spectators.

The representation of *Biliku* or *Puluga* as throwing her lightning in the form of a fire-brand or a shell appears in several of the legends of the origin of fire, and in particular in the legend of which different versions are found in all parts of the islands that tells how the kingfisher stole fire from *Biliku* and how the latter flung a fire-brand or a shell at the thief.

The most usual form of the fire legend, and the only one that I ever heard, is that in which the fire is stolen. Mr Man has recorded a version in which *Puluga* is represented as *giving* the fire to the ancestors. Considerable importance attaches to this motive of the story as it reveals to us the way in which the Andamanese usually think of *Biliku* and of their own relation to her. She is not, so far as these stories go, a benefactress who by the invention of fire has earned the gratitude of men, but rather a person with whom the human society, both in the time of the ancestors and at the present day, is in a condition of opposition. Though *Biliku* had fire, yet she kept it for herself and it was only obtained from her by stealth. She was angry when her fire was stolen and tried to punish the offender.

This opposition between *Biliku* and the ancestors is shown in other legends. In some of the stories she is represented not as living with the ancestors, but as living on one side of a narrow strait while the ancestors lived on the other, as in the *Akar-Bale* and *A-Pučikwar* legends. She is thus separated from the ancestors in the minds of the natives. In the *Aka-Kede* legend the ancestors eat the foods that *Bilika* regards as

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specially belonging to her, and she kills them. As a result the ancestors join together and kill *Bilika*. In the *Akar-Bale* version something of the same sort appears; *Puluga* is always getting angry with the ancestors because they eat vegetable foods, and in his anger he destroys their huts and other property (as a cyclone does, and as an Andaman Islander is sometimes known to do in a fit of temper); at last the ancestors send him away out of the world. In the *A-Pučikwar* legend *Bilik* goes away from the world in anger because the ancestors steal his fire. In the *Aka-Jeru* version *Biliku* eats up all the food of the ancestors, and so they go away and leave her; she then destroys them with her shells (lightning) and finally perishes in an attempt to cross the sea on a stone. All these legends seem to express much the same thing in different ways, namely the existence of a condition of hostility between *Biliku* and human beings, based on the fact that the latter venture to make use of the things (yams, etc.) that *Biliku* regards as peculiarly her property. There can be no doubt that this is the usual way in which the Andamanese conceive the relation between *Biliku* and the ancestors, and therefore, since the ancestors represent the society in its beginnings, between *Biliku* and themselves. This relation is quite in agreement with what we have seen to be the essential basis of the myth. The natives obtain from the N.E. monsoon things highly valued, such as yams and honey, but they are given as it were grudgingly after a period of storms, and finally taken away in another period of storms.

This view of *Biliku* as hostile to mankind is not, however, absolutely universal if we are to accept Mr Man's account of the myths of the South Andaman. Mr Man describes *Puluga* as the creator of the world and the beneficent ruler of mankind. Although I could not find a native who held exactly the same views about *Puluga* as those that Mr Man represents as being the views commonly held in the tribes he studied (*Aka-Bea* and *A-Pučikwar*), yet there is no doubt that at times, and more particularly in the southern tribes, the natives do regard *Puluga* as the benefactor and even the creator of the human race[1].

[1] In dealing with the account given by Mr Man of the Andaman mythology it is necessary to remember that he was undoubtedly influenced by a very strong desire to

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The representation of *Biliku* as hostile to mankind depends upon her position as the angry storm-sender, and this, as the legends show, does seem to be the more usual way of regarding her. But there is another and contrary aspect of *Biliku*. The revolution of the seasons brings to the Andamanese new supplies of relished foods,—the grubs of the *Kimil* season, the yams and honey of the cool and hot seasons. One of the Andamanese names for the season of the N.E. monsoon means "the season of abundance." Therefore *Biliku*, as the personification of this season, is herself the giver of good things. This aspect finds a partial expression in the legends. *Biliku* is regarded as having created or discovered the use of all the natural productions associated with her. (In one legend it is *Pɛrjido*, the son of *Biliku*, who discovers honey with his mother's help.) She thus occupies a position similar to that of the other ancestors, towards whom the men of the present feel grateful for the benefits they have bestowed on mankind. This view of *Biliku* as benefactress is often extended in the North Andaman to the belief that it was she who invented all the arts now practised by women, and there are traces of a belief that it was her son *Pɛrjido* who was similarly responsible for the arts practised by men.

This view of *Biliku* as a benefactress, although it conflicts to some extent with the view of her as on the whole hostile to mankind, yet, since it springs from the essential basis of the myth, cannot be overlooked. During the stormy season the Andaman Islander may well forget every aspect of *Biliku* save that she is responsible for the storms of which he goes in fear, but during the fine weather of the N.E. monsoon, when there is no longer any fear of a violent storm and when he is enjoying an abundance of the good things that he regards as especially belonging to *Biliku*, his feeling towards her must be of a very different nature; she is then the being who gives him the fine weather, the relished foods. Thus, contrary though they be,

show that the beliefs of the Andamanese about *Puluga* were really fundamentally the same as the beliefs of the Christian about his God. It may be taken as certain that he did not consciously allow this wish to affect his record of the Andaman beliefs, but it is very improbable that it did not unconsciously have a great deal of influence both on Mr Man and on his informants.

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these two aspects of *Biliku* are both integral parts of the myth.

But *Biliku* is also the first possessor of fire, and we have seen that fire is regarded by the Andamanese as the source of the life of society, and therefore, in a way, of all life. *Biliku* as the source from which comes the fire is also the source of life. This view of *Biliku* is certainly to be found in all parts of the islands, though it has been developed more in the South than in the North. *Biliku* thus becomes responsible for the beginning of the society, and since the whole universe centres in the society, of the whole universe. She becomes the being who created or arranged the order in which men live.

For the honour of this position *Biliku* has, however, a competitor. Besides the lightning there is another natural source of fire, the sun. We find therefore two different (and contrary) developments of the myth of the beginning of the world. In one of these the sun is associated with *Biliku*, is regarded as belonging to her or made by her. For instance, in an *Aka-Kede* legend, she is stated to have made the sun by throwing a flaming brand into the sky. By this means *Biliku* becomes the sole source of fire and therefore of life. This is the position that *Puluga* occupies in the versions of the legends recorded by Mr Man. In those legends *Puluga* gives fire to the first human beings by making the sun come down to earth and ignite a pile of wood. The alternative development makes the sun independent of *Biliku* and it is then the sun, or a mythical person associated directly with the sun, who becomes the maker of the world, the source of life. Unfortunately, I did not obtain much detailed information about this development of the myth. In the North Andaman the being named *Čara* is associated with the sun and with fine weather, and is certainly sometimes regarded as the maker of the world. In the South Andaman it is *Tomo* who is associated with the sun. Men and women, when they die, go to live with *Tomo* in the sky. It is *Tomo* who is responsible for all things being as they are. He was the first being; it was he who arranged the order of nature; and similarly it was he who created the social order, so that a question as to why some custom is observed is often answered by saying that it was

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Tomo who made it so. In Mr Man's account *Tomo* is degraded to the position of being merely the first man made by *Puluga*, but in the accounts that were given to me by the natives of the *Akar-Bale* and *A-Pučikwar* tribes *Tomo* was a rival of *Puluga*; sometimes one and sometimes the other was spoken of as being the supreme maker of all things. An *Akar-Bale* man of very high intelligence, who had been educated as a Christian, in trying to explain to me statements about *Tomo* made by another *Akar-Bale* who was regarded as an authority on the legends of his tribe, said that *Tomo* was the same thing to the *Akar-Bale* that God is to the Christian. When I asked him if it was not rather *Puluga* who was the Andaman equivalent of God, he said that some people might think so, but that according to the old man to whom I was talking it was *Tomo* and not *Puluga* who occupied the position[1].

There is only one more point that needs to be discussed, and that is the connection of *Biliku* with the spirits. It is clear that *Biliku* and *Tarai* must be distinguished from the spirits (*Lau*), yet at the same time *Biliku* is brought into relation with the spirits by the existence of two alternative explanations of bad weather. One of the explanations is that storms are due to *Biliku*, while the other is that they are due to the spirits, particularly the spirits of the sea. Both these beliefs, contradictory as they seem, are held by the Andamanese. The connection of the spirits with the weather is due to the fact that

[1] To complete the discussion of this part of the subject it would be necessary to deal with many points in the legends of the real meaning of which I do not feel satisfied. I have, for instance, given no explanation of the position of *Perǰido* in the *Biliku-Tarai* myth, although this is probably an important matter. Nor have I traced to its source the connection of *Biliku* (with her net, and her hole, or cave, in which she shuts herself up to sleep and from which she comes out to bring rain and storm) with the spider. Besides *Tomo*, *Biliku* has yet another competitor for the position of control over the fine weather of the hot season, namely the snake, *or-čubi* (*wara-ǰobo*), which is regarded as being in some way the guardian of honey and of fine weather. There are legends that show the connection of this snake with honey (page 227) and the same connection is shown in the honey-eating ceremony (page 105). According to Mr Man, when the natives of the South Andaman see a dark cloud approaching and they do not wish it to rain they threaten *Puluga* that they will call up the *wara-ǰobo* to bite him. The snake, like other snakes, is only to be seen during the hot weather of the honey season. It may be remembered that it is from this snake that the pattern used in decorating the body with white clay is named.

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the weather is a thing that can limit the activity of the society, and we saw in the last chapter that there is a tendency to associate with the spirits of the dead all things that in any way interfere with the smooth progress of social life. When it is said that a storm can be stopped by swishing arrows in the sea, or by placing in the sea a piece of *Anadendron* creeper, it is to the spirits of the sea, who are afraid of arrows and of the *Anadendron*, that the storm is attributed, and not to *Biliku*.

In the *A-Pučikwar* tribe I found an association of *Bilik* with the spirits. One man of this tribe (a medicine-man or dreamer) stated that the *Bīlik* are a distinct class of spirits, distinct from the *Lau* and the *Jurua*, yet similar to them. It is the *Bilik* who control the weather. Certain men, when they die, become not *Lau* or *Jurua*, but *Bilik*. Thus in one of his dreams that he related to me he met and conversed with the spirit of a deceased friend whom he spoke of as *Boičo Bilik*, *Boičo* having been his name when he was alive. A medicine-man is able to control the weather through his communication with the *Bilik* in dreams. In this tribe therefore we find a doctrine according to which *Bilik* is not the name of a single being but of a class of beings similar in essentials to the other two classes of spirits. It seemed to me possible that these beliefs are a comparatively late introduction by some of the medicine-men of the tribe. The *Boičo* about whom my informant *Tora* dreamed seemed to have had some part in the development of the doctrine. This does not, however, in the least detract from its value as affording us an insight into the beliefs of the Andamanese.

These beliefs clearly spring from an attempt to distinguish from one another the different northerly and easterly winds, each of the recognizable winds being regarded as a separate person, and from the merging together of the two contrary beliefs in the weather as regulated by spirits and by *Bilik* and *Teria*. The general system of beliefs about spirits as being responsible for all things that may affect human well-being inevitably leads to the notion that the weather is controlled by the spirits, and this is implied also in the belief that a medicine-man (whose power is derived from contact with the spirits) is also able to influence the weather to some extent. This doctrine, however,

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conflicts with the view of the weather and the seasons as controlled by *Biliku* and *Tarai*, who are not spirits but personifications of natural phenomena. It is perhaps this conflict between doctrines, both of them important and indeed necessary, that has led to the elaboration of the peculiar beliefs met with in the *A-Pučikwar* tribe.

I have dealt with most of the more important details of the *Biliku-Tarai* myth, and have tried to show that the whole myth is an expression of the social value of the phenomena of the weather and the seasons. These phenomena affect the social life in certain definite ways and thereby become the objects of certain sentiments; these sentiments are expressed in the legends. *Biliku* and *Tarai* are personifications of the N.E. and S.W. monsoons; as such they are responsible for the weather; feelings awakened by the weather are therefore referred to *Biliku* and *Tarai*; thus the fear of a cyclone at certain periods of the year is expressed as a fear of the anger of *Biliku*. Since the time when men go in fear of storms is also the time when they are just beginning to dig up yams and eat them, the myth connects the anger of *Biliku* with the digging up of yams, and similarly in the cases of honey and the cicada. As *Biliku* is associated with vegetable foods, and these are things with which women chiefly have to do, *Biliku* (in the North Andaman) is regarded as female; *Tarai*, being associated with flesh foods, is male; the two are therefore conceived as wife and husband. As the maker of storms *Biliku* is responsible for the lightning and is therefore possessed of fire. She thus comes to be regarded as the first possessor of fire. This gives rise to stories of how the ancestors obtained their fire from *Biliku*, and as she is generally regarded as being hostile rather than friendly towards mankind, the stories relate how the fire was stolen from her. But besides being the maker of storms *Biliku* is also the dispenser of the good things of the season of the N.E. monsoon and when this aspect of the procession of the seasons is prominent before their minds the natives think of *Biliku* as a benefactress of mankind. As she is the possessor of fire, and as fire is the source of the life of the society, she comes to be regarded as herself the source of life, though there is an

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alternative myth that gives this position to a being associated with the sun.

Such is a brief outline of the explanation that I have tried to demonstrate. It may be objected that there are a few important details and several minor details that I have not explained. To that extent my explanation is incomplete, but I hope that I have given sufficient evidence for it to justify us in using it as an integral part of the explanation of the meaning and function of the Andaman mythology in general.

It is not necessary, for the purpose of this chapter, to examine one by one all the legends recorded. Indeed, there are many details of the Andaman mythology that I cannot explain, owing simply, I believe, to my lack of insight into the ways of thought of the natives. The examples already considered are sufficient for the argument. If the interpretations given of these be correct we can base on them certain general conclusions.

I have explained some of the more important of the legends as being expressions or statements of the social value of natural phenomena. The alternation of day and night, for example, affects the life of the society in a certain definite manner and this gives rise to a certain way of thinking and feeling about the phenomenon in question. These thoughts and feelings, however, remain vague and without fixity until they are formulated and expressed either in the form of some definite rule of behaviour, such as the prohibition against noise while the cicada is singing, or in some concrete statement, such as that afforded by the legend of the origin of night. Similarly the legends relating to the origin of fire or the saving of the fire during the flood serve to give definite and permanent form to the vague feelings that result from the way in which the possession of fire affects the social life. Finally, I have tried to show that the myths relating to *Biliku* and *Tarai* are nothing but the expression in concrete form of the ideas and feelings that result from the effects of the weather and the seasons on the life of the Andaman Islanders. From these examples I now propose to draw a general conclusion. All the legends, I wish to maintain, are simply the expression in concrete form of the feelings and ideas aroused by things of all

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kinds as the result of the way in which these things affect the moral and social life of the Andaman Islanders. In other words the legends have for their function to express the social values of different objects,—to express in general the system of social values that is characteristic of the Andaman social organisation. To justify this general statement it will be necessary to show how it comes about that these representations are expressed in the form of myths and legends dealing with the ancestors and with such anthropomorphic beings as *Biliku* and *Tarai*.

Throughout the myths we meet with examples of what I have called the personification of natural phenomena. It is now necessary to give a more exact definition of this term. By it I mean the association of a natural phenomenon with the idea of a person in such a way that the characteristics of the phenomenon may be regarded as though they were actions or characteristics of the person. The simplest form is that in which the phenomenon itself is spoken of and thought of as if it were an actual person. Thus the sun and the moon are spoken of as Lady Sun and Sir Moon. Similarly, in the North Andaman, the night is personified and is called Lady Night (*Mimi Bat*). In many cases of personification however, while the person may or may not possess the same name as the phenomenon, the latter is said to be produced by the former. Thus, in the North Andaman, *Ele* is the name of the lightning, and *Ele* is spoken of as a person; yet, if we enquire further, we are told that *Ele* (the person) produces the lightning by shaking his leg. A somewhat similar case is that of *Biliku* and *Tarai*. These two beings are said to produce the winds that blow from the different quarters of the compass. But when we enquire as to the names of the winds, we find that in the South Andaman (*A-Pučikwar* tribe) the S.W. wind is called *Teria*, and the other winds are all called *Bilik*. Thus the name of the person is also used as the name of the phenomenon of which he is (in the phraseology here used) the personification. In the North Andaman we find a difference, the winds being called "the *Biliku* wind" and "the *Tarai* wind." It is necessary to insist on this translation of the native *Biliku bọto* and *Tarai bọto*. We should expect, if *Biliku* were simply a person who produced the

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winds, that the latter would be called "the wind of *Biliku*," a possessive form (*Biliku iño bọto*) being used, but this is not so, and the phrase habitually used can only be properly translated "the *Biliku* wind" just as we might say "the north wind." Thus, even in the North Andaman *Biliku* and *Tarai* are used as the names of the two chief winds.

In all these cases, sun and moon, *Biliku* and *Tarai*, etc., I propose to use the term personification, as being the most convenient and not liable to be misunderstood after having been carefully defined. We have now to seek an explanation of this process of personification. A great deal has been written on the subject of personification in mythology, and it is therefore not without diffidence that I venture to put forward an explanation which can only be very briefly stated in this place and would require for its full exhibition a lengthy psychological explanation.

An insight into the process of personification is afforded by considering our own use of figurative language. We talk of the angry storm, the raging sea. In such cases we allow ourselves for a moment to regard the natural phenomenon as if it were a person or the action of a person, and we do not even trouble distinctly to express the "as if." We use such phrases in order to attain a more forcible expression of our thoughts and feelings. How is it that such expressions succeed in the purpose for which they are used?

The reason would seem to be that our knowledge and understanding of persons is much more intimate than our knowledge of things. The fact that we are able, by the action of sympathy, to know what persons with whom we are in contact are feeling, gives us an understanding of them that we can never reach with inanimate objects.

In all human society the most important elements of the experience of the individual are due to his relations with other persons. In the development of the emotional life of the child, persons intervene at every turn, and there is thus built up a system of sentiments and representations which forms the very foundation of the individual's affective life. In other words the first organised experience that the individual attains is all connected with persons and their relations to himself. This

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372 by land or sea, is not confined to them, but is undertaken by those of either sex who have most leisure or are least burdened.

11. Probably nothing introduced by us so impressed them with the extent of our power and resources as *matches*; that we should be able to produce fire with such ease and by such means was not unnaturally regarded as evidence of our being superhumanly gifted.

372 **Superstitions.**—1. Fire is supposed to possess the power of driving away evil spirits: when, therefore, at night they hear in imagination the approach of the dreaded *.ē'rem-chàu'gala*,[1] they throw burning logs into the jungle surrounding the encampment. Again, should any of the community have occasion to leave their huts at night, no matter how short the distance, he (or she) invariably takes some fire as a protection against any demons that may be in the vicinity; a torch is also taken if it be very dark at the time.

[821] 2. Of darkness they assert that it was instituted on account of the misconduct of two of their ancestors, as will shortly be mentioned.[2]

776 784 821 3. From fear of displeasing *mai'a .ō'gar-*[3] (Mr. Moon), during the first few evenings of the third quarter, when he rises after sundown, they preserve silence, cease from any work on which they may be engaged—even halting-should they be travelling—and almost extinguish any light or fire which they may be burning. This is owing to the belief that he is jealous of attention being distracted to other objects than himself at such a time, or of any other light being employed than that which he has been graciously pleased to afford so abundantly. By the time the moon has ascended a few degrees, however, they restore their fires and resume their former occupations, as they consider they have then sufficiently complied with *mai'a .ō'gar-*'s wishes and requirements. The glowing aspect of the full moon on its first appearance above the horizon is supposed to indicate that *mai'a .ō'gar-* is enraged at finding some persons neglecting to observe these conciliatory measures; there is also an idea that, if he be greatly annoyed, he will punish them by withdrawing or diminishing the light of his countenance.

776 821 4. Regarding meteorolites they appear to possess no superstition. Shooting stars and meteors they view with apprehension, believing them to be lighted faggots hurled into the air by *.ē'rem-chàu'gala* in order to ascertain the whereabouts of any unhappy wight in his vicinity; if, therefore, they happen to be away from

[1] *Vide post* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 12.
[2] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 31.
[3] Singing, dancing, and thumping on the sounding board at that hour are, however, not displeasing to him.

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their encampment when the phenomenon occurs, they invariably secrete themselves, at the bottom of a boat, for example, if fishing, and remain silent for a short time before venturing to resume their interrupted employment. 776 821

5. Between dawn and sunrise they will do no work, save what is noiseless, lest the sun should be offended, and cause an eclipse, storm, or other misfortune to overtake them. If, therefore, they have occasion to start on a journey or hunting expedition at so early an hour, they proceed as quietly as possible, and refrain from the practice, observed at other periods of the day, of testing the strength of their bow-strings, as the snapping noise caused thereby is one of those to which the sun objects. 784 821

6. They invariably partake of a meal soon after rising, as it is believed that no luck can attend any one who starts to his day's work on an empty stomach. 777 264

7. They dare not use the wood of the tree called *al·aba-* (the bark of which supplies the fibre used in making harpoon lines and turtle nets) for cooking turtle, for, as will be found elsewhere,[1] this is an act so abhorrent to *mai·a .ō·gar-* that he visits the offenders with summary and condign punishment. 776

8. In tempestuous weather the leaves of the *Mimusops Indica* are constantly thrown on the fires, as the popping sounds thus produced are thought to have the effect of assuaging *Pū·luga-*'s fury and causing the weather to moderate. 821 776 [789]

9. When they see a dark cloud approaching at a time when rain would prove very inconvenient, as when hunting, travelling, &c., they advise *Pū·luga-* to divert its course by shouting "*.wâ·ra-jō·bo kō·pke, kō·pke, kō·pke*" [*Wā·ra-jōbo*[2] will bite, bite, bite (you)]. If in spite of this a shower falls they imagine that *Pū·luga-* is undeterred by their warning.

10. This practice of menacing *Pū·luga-* is probably that to which Colonel Symes alluded when he wrote that "they confess the influence of a malignant Being, and, during the south-west monsoon, when tempests prevail with unusual violence, they deprecate his wrath by wild choruses."

11. Storms are regarded as indications of *Pū·luga-*'s anger; winds are his breath, and are caused to be blown by his will; when it thunders *Pū·luga-* is said to be growling at something which has annoyed him; and lightning, they say, is a burning log flung by him at the object of his wrath.

12. There is an idea current that if during the first half of the rainy season they eat the *Caryota sobolifera*, or pluck and eat the seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, or gather yams or other edible 821 776 262

[1] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 32.

[2] This snake, as already mentioned under "Medicine," appears to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*.

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821 776 262 roots, another deluge would be the consequence, for *Pū·luga-* is supposed to require these for his own consumption at that period of the year; the restriction, however, does not extend to the *fallen* seeds of the *Entada pursætha*, which may be collected and eaten at any time with impunity.

821 776 789 13. Another of the offences visited by *Pū·luga-* with storms is the burning of beeswax,[1] the smell of which is said to be peculiarly obnoxious to him. Owing to this belief it is a common practice secretly to burn wax when a person against whom they bear ill-will is engaged in fishing, hunting, or the like, the object being to spoil his sport and cause him as much discomfort as possible; hence arises the saying among them, when suddenly overtaken by a storm, that some one must be burning wax.

776 821 787 14. The rainbow is regarded as *ē·rem-chàu·gala's* dancing or sounding board, which is only visible at certain times; its appearance is said to betoken approaching sickness or death to one of their number, and is, therefore, inauspicious.[2]

823 776 15. There are no superstitions anent hills, valleys, rocks, &c., which, as stated in my last paper,[3] *Pū·luga-* is believed to have formed for some purpose of his own. The formation of creeks is attributed to a fortunate accident, the account of which being connected with their traditions must be reserved for that section.[4]

823 775 16. They imagine earthquakes to be caused by some mischievous male spirits of their deceased ancestors, who, in their impatience at the delay in the resurrection, combine to shake the palm-tree on which they believe the earth to rest, in the hope thereby of destroying the cane bridge[5] which stretches between this world and heaven, and alone maintains the former in its present position. These selfish spirits are, however, said to be careful never to indulge in such practices during the dry months, as they imagine that, in consequence of the surface of the earth being then much cracked with heat, there would be considerable risk of its tumbling about their ears and crushing them instead of toppling over in one solid mass. They are said, therefore, never to play at earthquakes except during, or shortly after, the rainy season. But for the intervention of female spirits, who do their utmost to dissuade or prevent their male companions from continued enjoyment of this dangerous pastime, they are persuaded that there would be much cause for alarm on every occurrence of an earthquake.

775 17. They believe that every child which is conceived has had a

[1] *d'ja pid-* (*vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraph 4, footnote).
[2] The Chippeway Indians call it the dancing spirit (*vide* "Travels in the Interior of North America," by Maximilian, Prince of Wied).
[3] *Vide ante* "Topography," paragraph 3.
[4] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 13.
[5] *Vide post* "Religious Beliefs, &c.," paragraph 23.

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787 825 temporarily vacate their huts and remain on the alert with their weapons ready for immediate use. The cry of another bird, called *chē'ra-*, informs them of the approaching visit of a friend. Finally, if while travelling they hear the cawing of a crow, they say they must be near some occupied, or recently abandoned encampment. This belief is doubtless traceable to the fact that these birds are among the principal scavengers of their camping grounds.

•776 23. It has been noticed that they will never whistle between sunset and sunrise, and the reason they give is that this sound, more than any other, attracts *ē'rem-chàu'gala* during those hours. When animals behave in an unaccountable manner, especially at night, it is said to be because they see this demon.

773 **Religious Beliefs and Demonology.**—1. I have several times mentioned the Supernatural Beings, *Pū'luga-* and *ē'rem-chàu'gala*, and must now enter more into detail regarding the beliefs held by the Andamanese concerning these and other spirits.

2. Though no forms of worship or religious rites are to be found among them, yet are there certain beliefs regarding powers of good and evil, the Creation, and of a world beyond the grave, which show that even these savages have traditions more or less approximating the truth, but whence derived will ever remain a mystery.

3. It is extremely improbable that their legends were the result of the teaching of missionaries or others who might be supposed to have landed on their shores in by-gone years; for not only have they no tradition of any foreigners having settled in their midst and intermarried with their ancestors, or even of having so far established amicable intercourse as to be able to acquire a knowledge of any one of their languages, but our own records, so far from differing from theirs on these points, tend clearly to show that, from the earliest times till so recently as 1858, these islanders have been more or less universally regarded as cannibals, in consequence of which they were much dreaded by all navigating the adjacent seas. The persistency with which they resisted with showers of arrows all attempts to land on their shores,[1] precludes the belief that any one, prior to our settlement,[2] would from choice have visited these islanders in the vain hope of reclaiming them from their savage state, and in order to teach them the Biblical, Mahomedan, or other versions of the Creation, Fall, Deluge, &c.; while it may surely be

[1] The probable cause of their hostility will be explained in a later section (*vide post* "Trade, &c.," paragraph 1).

[2] In 1870 an orphanage was established at Ross Island (Port Blair) for children of the aborigines, but it is very doubtful whether even the more intelligent of the inmates have obtained, much less retained, more than an elementary knowledge of the outline of the truths of Christianity.

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assumed that if any shipwrecked persons had ever been cast on their coast, they would, in the improbable event of their lives being spared, have left some traces of the fact, such as might be looked for among the customs, in the culture, or physical characteristics of these savages, but these are vainly to be sought in any section of the race. 773

4. Moreover, to regard with suspicion, as some have done, the genuineness of such legends as those in question argues ignorance of the fact that numerous other tribes,[1] in equally remote or isolated localities have, when first discovered, been found to possess similar traditions on the subjects under consideration.

5. Further, on this subject as well as on all others in which there appeared any risk of falling into error, I have taken special care not only to obtain my information on each point from those who are considered by their fellow-tribesmen as authorities, but who, from having had little or no intercourse with other races, were in entire ignorance regarding any save their own legends: I have, besides, in every case, by subsequent inquiry, endeavoured to test their statements, with the trustworthiness of which I am thoroughly satisfied. I may also add that they all agree in stating that their accounts of the Creation, &c., were handed down to them by their first parent *Tŏ·mo-* (Adam), and his immediate descendants, while they trace all their superstitions and practices to the "days before the Flood!"

6. I shall presently speak of the legends current anent the Creation, and also the Fall and Deluge: the latter will there be seen to have been, *selon eux*, consequent on the former.

7. In spite of their knowledge of, or belief in, a Supreme Being,[2] whom they call *Pū·luga-*, they live in constant fear of certain evil spirits, whom they apprehend to be ever present, and on the watch to do them some bodily injury. 776

8. Of *Pū·luga-* they say that—

I. Though His appearance is like fire, yet He is (now-a-days) invisible.

II. He was never born and is immortal.

III. By him the world and all objects, animate and inanimate, were created, excepting only the powers of evil. 772

IV. He is regarded as omniscient while it is day, knowing even the thoughts of their hearts.

V. He is angered by the commission of certain sins,[3] while to

[1] A story of the Fall occurs in the myths of the Eskimo, the South Sea Islanders, the Zulus, the Australians and the New Zealanders (*vide* "Biblical Traditions and Savage Myths."—*St. James' Gazette*, July 14th, 1881.)

[2] *Vide* Mouat, pp. 303–4.

[3] *Vide ante* "Crimes," paragraph 2.

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those in pain or distress he is pitiful, and sometimes deigns to afford relief.

VI. He is the Judge from whom each soul receives its sentence after death, and, to *some* extent, the hope of escape from the torments of *jer·eg-làr-mū·gu-* (regarding which anon) is said to affect their course of action in the present life.[1]

9. *Pū·luga-* is believed to live in a large stone house in the sky, with a wife whom he created for himself; she is green in appearance, and has two names, *chān·a .àu·lola* (Mother Freshwater Shrimp), and *chān·a .pá·lak-* (Mother Eel); by her he has a large family, all, except the eldest, being girls; these last, known as *mô·ro-win-* (sky spirits or angels), are said to be black in appearance, and, with their mother, amuse themselves from time to time by throwing fish and prawns into the streams and sea for the use of the inhabitants of the world. *Pū·luga-'s* son is called *.pīj-chô·r-*: he is regarded as a sort of archangel, and is alone permitted to live with his father, whose orders it is his duty to make known to the *mô·ro-win-*.

[82] 10. *Pū·luga-* is said to eat and drink, and, during the dry months of the year, to pass much of his time in sleep, as is proved by his voice (thunder) being rarely heard at that season; he is the source whence they receive all their supplies of animals, birds, and turtles; when they anger him he comes out of his house and blows, and growls, and hurls burning faggots at them—in other words, visits their offences with violent thunderstorms and heavy squalls; except for this purpose he seldom leaves home, unless it be during the rains, when he descends to earth to provide himself with certain kinds of food; how often this happens they do not know since, now-a-days, he is invisible.

11. *Pū·luga-* never himself puts any one to death, but he objects so strongly to seeing a pig badly quartered and carved that he invariably points out those who offend him in this respect to a class of malevolent spirits called *.chôl-*, one of whom forthwith despatches the unfortunate individual.

12. *Pū·luga-* has no *authority* over the evil spirits, the most dreaded of which are *.ē·rem-chàu·gala*, *jū·ru-win-*, and *.nī·la-*; they are self-created, and have existed from time immemorial. The first of these, the evil spirit of the woods, has a numerous progeny by his wife *chān·a .bad·gilola*, who remains at home with her daughters and younger children, while her husband and grown-up sons roam about the jungles with a lighted torch

[1] It is from regard to the fact that their beliefs on these points approximate so closely to the true faith concerning the Deity that I have adopted the English method of spelling all equivalents of "God" with an initial capital.

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attached to their left legs, in order that the former may injure any unhappy wights who may meet them unprotected,[1] and in the dark; he generally makes his victims ill, or kills them by wounding them internally with invisible arrows,[2] and, if he is successful in causing death, it is supposed that they feast upon the raw flesh;[3] *.ē·rem-chàu·gala*, indeed, appears to be to the Andamanese much what "*Arlak*"[4] is to the aboriginal Australian: in both cases these evil spirits are represented as afraid of light; *.ē·rem-chàu·gala* is said to be also afraid of, or to avoid, the demon *.nī·la-*.

13. This spirit, *.nī·la-*,[5] is supposed to live in ant-hills, and to have neither wife nor child; he is not regarded as such a malevolent personage as *.ē·rem-chàu·gala*, and, though he is always armed with a knife, he rarely injures human beings with it, or, when he does do so, it is not in order to feed upon their bodies, for he is said to eat earth only.

14. As regards *.jū·ru-win-*, the evil spirit of the sea, they say that he too is invisible, and lives in the sea with his wife and children, who help him to devour the bodies of those who are drowned or buried at sea; fish constitute the staple of his food, but he also occasionally, by way of variety, attacks the aborigines he finds fishing on the shores or by the creeks. The weapon he uses is a spear, and persons who are seized with cramp or any sudden illness, on returning from, or while on the water, are said to have been "speared" by *.jū·ru-win-*. He has various submarine residences, and boats for travelling under the surface of the sea, while he carries with him a net, in which he places all the victims, human or piscine, he may succeed in capturing.

15. Besides these three chief demons, there is a company of evil spirits who are called *.chôl-*, and who are much dreaded. They are believed to be descendants of *mai·a .chôl-*,[6] who lived in antediluvian times. They generally punish those who offend them by baking or roasting pig's flesh, the smell of which is particularly obnoxious to them, as it is also to *Pū·luga-*, who, therefore, often assists them in discovering the delinquent; the same risk does not attend *boiling* pork,[7] which the olfactory nerves of the fastidious *.chôl-* are not keen enough to detect.

[1] *Vide ante* "Superstitions," paragraph 1.
[2] *Vide ante* "Medicine," paragraph 1 (foot-note), and "Death and Burial," paragraph 24.
[3] *Vide ante* "Death and Burial," paragraph 26.
[4] *Vide* Wood, "Natural History of Man," p. 92.
[5] Cases have been cited of persons who have been found stabbed, whose deaths are attributed to *Nī·la*: the possibility of the individuals in question having been murdered is scouted.
[6] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraph 33.
[7] *Vide post* "Food," paragraph 27.

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16. While the Andamanese say that they are liable to be struck by *ē·rem-chàu·gala* or *jū·ru-win-* at any time or in any place, the *.chôl-* strike those only who offend them, and that during the day while they are stationary, this being necessitated by the distance from the earth of their abode, whence they hurl their darts: an invisible spear is the weapon they always use, and this is thrown with unerring aim at the head of their victim, and is invariably fatal. As these demons are considered especially dangerous on the hottest days, they are apparently held accountable for the deaths from sunstroke which happen from time to time.

17. The sun, *chān·a .bo·do-*, is the wife of the moon, *mai·a .ō·gar-*, and the stars, *.châ·to-*, which are of both sexes, are their children: the latter go to sleep during the day; the whole family have their meals near *Pū·luga-*'s house, but never enter it; *chān·a .bō·do-* is like fire and covered with thorns, but *mai·a .ō·gar-* is white skinned, and has two long tusks[1] and a big beard; their home is situated somewhere below the eastern horizon, and while the former, after setting, rests till dawn, the latter, probably in consequence of the cares of his numerous family, is obliged to keep very irregular hours. During their passage under the earth to their home, they are believed to afford the blessing of light to the unfortunate spirits in Hades, and also, while sleeping, to shed a "dim religious light" over that region: it is by *Pū·luga-*'s command that the celestial bodies, while crossing the sky, bestow their light.

18. The phenomena of the waning and waxing of the moon is explained by saying that they are occasioned by "his" applying a coating of cloud to his person by degrees, after the manner of their own use of *kòi·ob-* and *tâ·la-ōg-*,[2] and then gradually wiping it off.[3]

19. Reference has already been made to their superstition regarding the cause of a lunar eclipse, but in case *mai·a .ō·gar-* should be so ill-advised as permanently to withhold his light or render himself in other ways still more disagreeable, whenever the moon is eclipsed some persons at once seize their bows and twang them as rapidly as possible, thereby producing a rattling sound as if discharging a large number of arrows, while others commence at once sharpening their *râ·tà-*.[4] Of course this hostile demonstration is never lost upon the moon, who does not venture to hurt those who show themselves ready

[1] The horns of the crescent moon.

[2] *Vide* Appendix B, items 58 and 60.

[3] "The Eskimo say that the sun, which they regard as feminine, smears the face of her brother, the moon, with soot, when he presses his love upon her" (*vide* Peschel, p. 256).

[4] *Vide* Appendix B, item 2.

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to give him so uncomfortable a reception. Their immunity from harm on these occasions has given rise to some joking at the expense of the luminary in question, for, during the continuance of the eclipse, they shout in inviting tones to the hidden orb as follows:—*.ō·gar-, la den bal·ak ban lē·be ng'ĭdō·ati! dō·ati! dō·ati!*[1] (O moon, I will give you the seed of the *bal·ak!* show yourself! appear! appear!)

20. This seems to explain the custom which Colonel Symes describes as adoration to the sun and moon, for, as has been stated, no traces of worship or forms of religion, in the common acceptation of the term, exist among these tribes.

21. A solar eclipse alarms them too much to allow of their indulging in jests or threats, &c.: during the time it lasts they all remain silent and motionless, as if in momentary expectation of some calamity.

22. The world, exclusive of the sea, is declared to be flat and to rest on an immense palm-tree (*Caryota sobolifera*) called *bâ·rata-*, which stands in the midst of a jungle comprising the whole area under the earth. This jungle, *.châ·itâ·n-* (Hades), is a gloomy place, for, though visited in turn by the sun and moon, it can, in consequence of its situation, be only partially lighted: it is hither the *spirits* (*chàu·ga-*) of the departed are sent by *Pū·luga-* to await the Resurrection.

23. No change takes place in *.châ·itâ·n-* in respect to growth or age; all remain as they were at the time of their departure from the earth, and the adults are represented as engaged in hunting, after a manner peculiar to disembodied spirits. In order to furnish them with sport the spirits of animals and birds are also sent to *.châ·itâ·n-*, but as there is no sea there, the *chàu·ga-* of fish and turtle remain in their native element and are preyed upon by *.jū·ru-win-*. The spirits (*chàu·ga-*) and souls (*ōt-yō·lo-*) of all children who die before they cease to be entirely dependent on their parents (*i.e.*, under six years of age) go to *.châ·itâ·n-*, and are placed under a *ràu-*[2] (*Ficus laccifera*) on the fruit of which they subsist. As none can quit *.châ·itâ·n-* who have once entered, they support their stories regarding it by a tradition that in ages long past an *ôko-paî·ad-*[3] was favoured in a dream with a vision of the regions and of the pursuits of the disembodied spirits.

24. Some of their legends, as will be seen elsewhere,[4] appear to bear out the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, as

[1] This is said derisively, for, although these seeds are largely consumed by the pigs, the aborigines themselves do not consider them fit for food.

[2] *Vide ante* "Superstitions," paragraph 17.

[3] *Vide ante* "Magic and Witchcraft," paragraph 1.

[4] *Vide post* "Mythology," paragraphs 15, 16, 29.

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marriage. The animals, birds, and fish will also re-appear in the new world in their present form. 775

29. This blissful state will be inaugurated by a great earthquake,[1] which, occurring by *Pū·luga-*'s command, will break the *pi·dga-làr-chàu·ga-* and cause the earth to turn over: all alive at the time will perish, exchanging places with their deceased ancestors.[2]

30. There is no trace to be found of the worship of trees, stones, or other objects, and it is a mistake to suppose[3] that they adore or invoke the celestial bodies. There is no salutation, dance, or festival of any kind held in honour of the new moon: its appearance does not evoke anything more than an exclamation such as *yē·lo! .ō·gar l'àidō·atire.* (Hurrah! there's the moon.) 776

Mythology.—1. In other sections mention has been made of *Pū·luga-*, the Creator of all, and it has also been stated that no reason is given for the formation of the earth's surface, except that it was according to His will, and the same hypothesis is held to account for the varying seasons. 773

2. Until recent years it was supposed[4] that the Andamanese were without traditions, and had no idea of their own origin, but since we have been enabled to become better acquainted with them it has been ascertained that such is not the case. While I have been extremely careful as to the source whence I obtained my information, I would at the same time mention that much that is found under these last headings has been obtained from the older and more intelligent members of distant communities, and is probably little, if at all, known to many of the rising generation in our immediate vicinity.

3. Certain mythic legends are related to the young by *ôko-pai·ad-*s,[5] parents, and others, which refer to the supposed adventures or history of remote ancestors, and, though the recital not unfrequently evokes much mirth, they are none the less accepted as veracious. The personages figuring in these tales are believed to be real and historical, but, beyond the fact of a very general acceptance and agreement of the traditions respecting them, no satisfactory traces are to be found of their existence except in the lively imaginations of their descendants.

4. There are a few discrepancies in their accounts of the

[1] *Vide ante* "Superstitions," paragraph 16.

[2] Whether the fate of the former is irrevocably fixed is not explained, but with these, as with other savages, it is in vain to expect them to understand the logical conclusions to which their beliefs tend.

[3] *Vide* statements of Symes, Brown, Grant, and Anderson; *vide* also *ante* "Superstitions," paragraphs 9 and 10.

[4] *Vide* Mouat, p. 343.

[5] *Vide ante* "Magic and Witchcraft," paragraph 1.

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to them that I was able to find the various amphibia which subsequently proved to be new species. They know poisonous and non-poisonous snakes by sight and how to avoid being bitten. They could tell me which trees flowered and when, because they knew this affected the whereabouts and the quality of the honey, and they knew which flowers and roots had medicinal properties. The necessity, in accordance with their superstitions, of keeping their prey alive as long as possible has also given them a somewhat gruesome knowledge of anatomy and physiology. The call of food has also made them weather experts; they know which air currents and winds bring what animals, or cause them to vanish, and what game is likely to haunt what terrain. They could tell me where to find certain fish, or crustacea, or where certain roots or fruit in season were to be found.

The striking feature of their knowledge was that it did not merely relate to what was edible or inedible. Amphibia, reptiles and birds for example, they never eat under any circumstances; but they knew where to find them all for me, and they knew the bird migrations and how these related to the movements of the marine fauna.

Providentially, the exactitude of the Onges' botanical and zoological knowledge is matched by the magnitude of their superstitious fears. Were it not for this all the edible vegetation on the islands would have disappeared long ago as a result of their incredibly thoughtless destruction. The effect, therefore, is almost that of a purely involuntary, embryonic form of 'agriculture', contrasting strangely with their persisting, persistent and complete lack of interest in any formal care, however primitive. The Onges believe that the plants which produce edible roots and tubers belong to a spirit related to Eiuga, whose anger is aroused if he sees his plants being taken; his vengeance is quick and terrible.

There are on Little Andaman a number of creepers with edible fleshy roots, sometimes as thick as a man's wrist, sticking out horizontally at least fifty to sixty centimetres from the main stem, only just below the surface. They invariably grow in light soil, where there are no rocks, and are very easy for the Onges to reach with their digging sticks. These and the yams, sometimes as big as a football, which are to be found everywhere, the Onges have to steal from the spirit who owns them. The creepers themselves,

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twining up into the trees, and the shorter-stemmed yams, are never disturbed. The Onges merely dig down, at a respectful distance from the plant, certain of finding what they want. On no account must there be any signs of the theft for the spirit to see, so they quietly take off roots or tubers some way from the main stem and leave the rest, patting the earth down afterwards and covering the place with leaves. The guardian spirit, not, apparently, all-seeing, notices nothing, as the plant continues to flourish, improved by the root pruning. Everyone, guardian spirit and Onges alike, is happy.

This unconscious preservation may well be the result of a decree, in some remote past, by an Onge seer who realized the danger of killing off the entire plants and invented the guardian spirits as a deterrent. The Negritos still make similar use of roots and tubers; Skeet and Blagden fifty years ago referred to the Semang eating poisonous wild yams, having removed the toxic substances.[1]

It is interesting that both in the past and even today a number of peoples at a very early stage of cultural development have progressed from the gathering of the wild yams of South-East Asia to the first signs of cultivation and agriculture. It is possible that they were the first plants ever to be cultivated by primitive Man, the Negritos with their digging sticks delving then as they do now; the genus is certainly a very ancient one, and some species, such as *Dioscorea alata*, may have spread from Asia to Africa and Oceania, and even to America, with the beginning of cultivation. But this is a stage of development which the peoples of the Andaman never reached.

The digging stick, the only implement the Onges have with which to get at the roots and tubers, has in recent times been affected, though to a very limited extent by the spread of iron. Only a few individuals possess a primitive iron tool, half a metre long, cylindrical in shape and usually not more than one and a half centimetres in diameter and flattened into a form of blade at one end. The vast majority still have only the age-old stick made of hard wood, hardly recognizable as a tool and crudely fashioned into a point at one end. This tool, so primitive that it can easily be mistaken for an odd

[1] It is interesting that the American Aborigines, especially in Brazil, do the same with manioc, but I saw nothing of this nature in the Andamans.

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Owing to the difficulty of pushing through the undergrowth the Onges always travel in single file, following closely behind one another, the men first, then the women and children, with the dogs following all round. They never travel alone; I hardly ever met any by themselves, but always in groups of families or groups of hunters. The man who happens to be at the front of the file is the guide and when they come to an awkward part of the journey – perhaps across a deep river – everybody helps. Trees are felled to fall across between the banks and a rope of lianas is run across to make the crossing easier for the aged, the women and the children, though their sense of balance is so good that most of them manage without it, even when carrying heavy loads across a single trunk.

The Onges are now nearly all related to each other in some way. They all know each other, and the contacts are usually friendly. The few squabbles which I saw, always over game, or food that had been gathered, all blew over very quickly; normally, especially in the dry season when every group becomes nomadic in search of food, everyone went freely all over the island. On the occasions of the great hunts, or the honey feasts, a number of groups would band together for the occasion and even then they tried to divide the spoils equally and peaceably. If a dispute does arise the camp will break up into factions, but these will still keep close to each other and after a short while their differences will be made up with the usual long and tearful embraces. These scenes of reconciliation may go on for days, all starting from nothing more serious than a difference of opinion over the division of game captured by communal effort!

Much more important than the danger of offending other human beings is that of causing offence to the spirits of the dead or the guardian spirits who provide food. There is, as I have said, not overmuch rigidity in their observations – no propitiatory offerings of any kind are made to the spirits. The supreme being, Eiuga, who takes the shape of a lizard bigger than a crocodile, they know well. On Great Andaman he becomes Puluga, equally powerful, lord of men and things but rather more anthropomorphic than his counterpart in Little Andaman. As Eiuga lives in the sky, the thunder is his voice, and the wind his breath; if he is angry he breathes out storms and throws burning tree-trunks down to the earth, setting light to the forest. Behind Eiuga are a series of minor spirits who

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776 rule the multiplication and growth of the various animals and plants useful to Man.

The Onges do not love Eiuga, or any of the other spirits. They merely fear them, and seek to evade their anger by various expedients. It is curious that they never hesitate to try and deceive the spirits and think themselves very clever when they manage to steal roots or tubers from the ground. Nor do they revere the spirits of their ancestors; these are to be feared and propitiated by preservation of their bones. By definition none of the spirits, since they can be deceived by simple tricks, can be all-powerful, but this conclusion, simple though it is, is still beyond the Onges' powers of reasoning.

769 The Onges' fear of the dead is instanced by their carrying round their necks the *ibidanghe*, or necklet of human jaws, as a propitiation. The wearing of the bones prevents the spirit from going away (by analogy the bones of dead enemies are burned to force the spirit, clearly a hostile one, to leave the place). The custom of burial within the communal hut follows the same logic – the spirits of the dead are kept near their bones and hence near their relatives, to help them in the daily round of hunting, fishing and gathering food.[1]

769 Unlike most of the other peoples whose burial customs are even 778 today based on their underlying principles, the Onges have not 776 progressed beyond the stage of relating the dead directly to the 782 demands of daily life; they have no 'practices' of any kind, no con- 784 cept at all of holy places, prayers or images. Even the very names of the dead are soon forgotten. Their fears, however, are none the less very real. They do not like to speak of Eiuga or even of the lesser spirits, for fear of attracting their attention.

773 The Onges have no stories or explanatory legends, like those 538 reported by Brown for Great Andaman. They have only short 533 epics, if such they may be called, recalling extraordinary events in

[1] This belief is of very remote origin, and can be traced back at least to the megaliths of southern Asia, like the splendid ones which I was able to photograph, among others, in the mountains of Travancore. Here again the object was to prevent the dead from leaving their relatives. Similar ideas are found today in India among several tribes, notably the Munda, or Nias, and among various peoples of Indonesia, and even Oceania. The rituals are probably followed today without any understanding of their meaning or symbolism; the details vary from place to place, but the underlying principle, the original fear, remains the same everywhere.

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their hunting and fishing, or contacts with strangers, which are loudly chanted, accompanied by miming and dancing, during their nocturnal celebrations. One was sung and danced in my honour; Cendubai,[1] head of the Lulera hut, much struck by the sight of me in my hammock slung between two trees on nylon cords, delivered himself of a warning over the danger I was running using such thin cords. At the end of each 'verse' the refrain '*cué-cian-ghéghoéthée-chéle*' (he will hurt himself) repeated his fear of the cords breaking.

Hunting and fishing episodes are to the Onges less interesting than themes like my safety, because to them they lack the repetitive refrain. In their dances, on the other hand, they prefer something else, to us monotonous, but for them always new, and even exciting; more than anything they love to dance the stages of courtship to its culmination, with the help of words and extraordinarily (to Western eyes regrettably) vivid gestures.

Birds, to the Onges, harbour the spirits of the dead, and it is for this reason that they are never eaten, contrary to the assertions of Brown.[2] Similar fears extend to lizards, the jungle cats, bats, rats and snakes. I have confirmed this among both the Onges and the Arioto. The latter even refused to eat some fat pigeons which I offered them not knowing of the taboo; they accepted the gifts, but the pigeons were eventually eaten by my own men. And the Onges whom I took with me to Port Blair for a few days refused point blank to eat pigeon or chicken.

The spirits select the Onges' food for them, in the sense that they regard everything as edible or poisonous, according to whether the guardian spirit is benign or malevolent. Given the curious adaptability of the spirits and the intensely practical way in which they operate it is hardly surprising that their benevolence or malignity coincides remarkably well with those foods which tend to promote normal health!

[1] I was sorry to learn that Cendubai died suddenly in 1955 aged barely forty.

[2] Curiously enough, while the Onges' fears lead them to reject out of hand any food of animal origin which is unknown to them, the same does not apply to vegetable foods. They ate half-rotten fruit, which I offered them, even though they had never seen it before, and they clamoured for rice and tea, so much so that in order to prevent them becoming addicted to the rice, as so often happens when primitive peoples meet a new food, I insisted on receiving equal quantities of yams in exchange for the rice and very sweet tea, to slow down their demands.

build it (when I wanted to acquire two for the new anthropological museum at Port Blair and the Indian Museum in Calcutta I had to bargain with the men recognized as the owners, although the price had to be distributed among all the members of the group).

The chief delight of the men on their fishing trips is the capture of a Giant Turtle. I have already described (p. 88) the spear harpoons which the Onges use to catch them. Once caught, the wretched animals are subjected to a form of vivisection utterly incomprehensible to the Western mind; they are literally cut up alive and the pieces thrown into the boiling cooking-pot. Nor have I ever witnessed anything so terrible as the way in which the Onges, in the absence of any suitable cooking vessel, or the materials for an earth oven, roast these turtles whole and alive over a slow fire. They seem totally unable to realize that animals can feel pain and laugh like children at the other atrocious tortures they unwittingly inflict not only on the turtles, but on every living thing that falls into their hands.

These marine turtles (as far as I was able to see there were no land turtles in the Andamans) yield a far greater amount of food than the dugong, and provide the islanders with both meat and eggs. Two species are common in the seas round the islands, *Chelonia virgata*, or the green turtle, and *Caretta imbricata*, which supplies the shells normally sold commercially. The Onges prefer the former, which are both meaty and more plentiful.

Turtle-hunting and egg-collecting is done by the menfolk. The method is very like that used for dugong and large fish, using the harpoon. Owing to their fear of the spirits abroad in the night, the Onges never go near the beaches between dusk and dawn, when it would be easy to take the turtles on land and immobilize them by turning them on their backs. They do know this trick, however, and use it when captured turtles (often weighing up to a hundredweight) are too heavy to carry in the canoe; the animals are turned on their backs and dumped on the beach ready to pick up later.

The Onges harpoon the turtles from canoes, preferably at night when the turtles are nearing the shore, which they never approach in the day time. When there is a moon the creatures are easily seen, and on dark nights the phosphorescence of the sea helps.

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head ornaments and religious ceremonies. In Oceania there is, too, the habit of changing personal names from time to time so prevalent among the Onges, and the existence of actual linguistic connections between Nicobarese, Andamanese, Semang, Aetà and peoples of Oceania have been demonstrated by experts.

Any differences which exist today are the result of centuries of contact with other peoples which the Semang and Aetà have experienced, unlike the Andamanese, who thus represent today the true Negritos. While life generally has changed somewhat over the centuries for the Semang and Aetà, certain typical facets of their culture have remained unaltered. Ritual cutting and distributing of game, the use of the arrow harpoon (always unfeathered) and the simple Onge-Negrito bow are still the same, despite the fact that the three groups have been separated for a very long time. Even the very absence of defensive weapons is a common feature; admittedly outside the Andamans arrows are poisoned and some may be feathered, but this is a recent and imitative innovation which is not found among the Andamanese, by virtue of their constant isolation. The persistence among the Onges of the simple bow tends to support the idea of Little Andaman as the first stage in the northward spread of the Negritos after they reached the island from Sumatra via the Nicobars. In Malacca the Semang have retained the same bow, as have the Aetà in the Philippines.

Among what may be termed similarities of physical habits is nose-rubbing as a sign of affection, found in the Andamans, in Oceania, and parts of Papuasia and Melanesia. In all these areas there is the same belief that pregnancy is due to entry of a spirit into the body, and the same habit of suckling children for as long as four years. Similar too throughout the area are the methods of 'curing' disease, such as smearing with ochre and heavy massage carried out beside a fire, swallowing of balls of ochre, and the 'smoking' of wounds, smeared with a mixture of ochre and honey. As protection from the sun or the rains (especially for the young children) crude umbrellas are made from giant palm leaves.

There are no prayers or propitiatory sacrifices to ensure health and well being, but there is throughout the area the same concept of mysterious forces to be feared, evaded, or let loose against enemies – never loved. Generally they are thought of in terms of spirits, usually active at night. There is some divergence in the

way in which the spirits are invoked against enemies, involving the use of some personal possession – an example is the invariable destruction of the used *naquinegbe*, or of hair after shaving. The same fear of the night induced by the idea of spirits walking abroad led to the making of torches from rolled palm leaves containing a mixture of embers and resin.

From the Andamans to Oceania the chief spirit is generally imagined in the form of a giant lizard, living at the top of the sky and ruling the storms; none of the peoples who believe in him ever eat any lizard or lizard-like creature. All of them have the same sexually suggestive dances, both male and female, sometimes inspired by the monitor or dragon-lizard, symbol of desire, and often associated with miming and dramatic representations of real and imaginary scenes. These dances, with their *joie de vivre*, are accompanied by the smoking of aromatic leaves in pipes which are frequently made from natural objects such as the claws of crustacea. The Onges in fact have since very ancient times used only this type as shown in the lower levels of the kitchen-middens dating back at least five thousand years. Everywhere, pipes of this kind are used indiscriminately by both sexes, passing from mouth to mouth. Pipes identical in every way with those of the Onges are found to the east of the archipelago, well into Oceania, and I have myself also seen them on Melville Island, north of Australia, always with the same notches for the teeth to grip. This undeniable evidence of the spread of identical pipes over so wide an area long before the possibility of European contacts cannot in my opinion be attributed other than to migration over vast distances in very ancient times.

Similar coincidences apply in the case of the arrow harpoon and indeed harpoons in general. I cannot agree with Brown in his assertion that the harpoon dates from the arrival of European influences, which brought the use of iron; the harpoon points made by long and patient working of *Tridacna* shells which I found in the kitchen-middens of the Andamans are in my view enough to refute the theory.

The canoes from which these harpoons are used, with the absence of distinction between bow and stern and the single float on the lee side, are extremely typical. They are identical in peoples which have been widely separated for a very long time and appear not only on the Andamans, and as far as Oceania, but also in North

dead were buried securely bound in a knee-to-chest position, still the custom among the Andamanese). The Onges go no further than this and the idea of a Lord of the Spirits who rules all things, although on Great Andaman there has been some progress towards more anthropomorphic concepts. The complete absence of any form of cult, prayer, representation, or votive offering cannot, I feel, be the result of cultural decline from a more advanced age; this would have resulted in gross distortion and illogical superstition, but not in complete absence of any 'religious' practices of any kind.

18 SACRIFICE

No sacrifices of any kind are practised in the Andamans, nor is there any concept of propitiation, although there is evidence that even in the late Palaeolithic era some form of ritual sacrifice was practised, at least in Europe and probably over a much wider area. One would assume from this, and from paragraph 17 above, that the Andamanese is an even older culture.

19 TABOOS

Although my own experiences among the Onges have led me to think that taboos do not exist, some authors have asserted (in my view wrongly) their existence on Great Andaman. It is not, however, possible to draw any reliable conclusions on this point.

20 CEREMONIAL

The complete absence of any form of ritual surrounding birth, the purification of women, initiation, etc., or evidence of any such ritual in the past, is striking, in view of the prevalence in all the surrounding areas of strictly observed ceremonial for many occasions. As in the case of religion, such complete absence can only mean that the Andamanese became isolated before the idea of ritual spread to the area.

21 MEASUREMENT

The Andamanese have no means of counting, and no words to express gradations of time or size; to them everything is either 'small' or 'big'. They take no interest in the passing of years, and have no idea of their own age. To them life is but the passing of the seasons and the harvests of game and fish and fruits that they bring. This utter lack of any sense